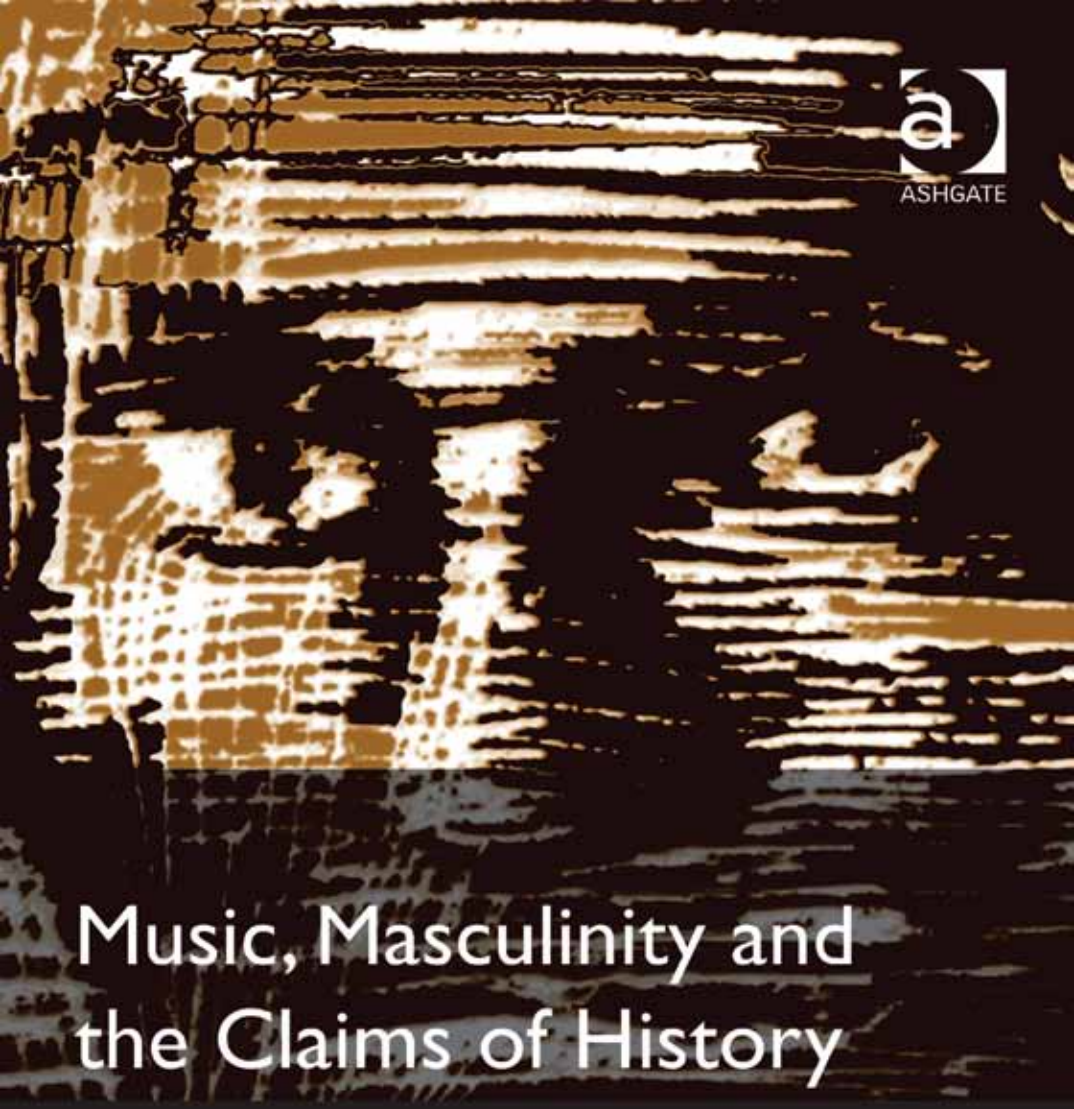


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Music, Masculinity and the Claims of History

The Austro-German Tradition from Hegel to Freud

Ian Biddle

MUSIC, MASCULINITY AND THE CLAIMS OF HISTORY

For my family: Margaret, Eric and Georgina, with much love

Music, Masculinity and the Claims of History

The Austro-German Tradition from Hegel to Freud

IAN BIDDLE
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ASHGATE

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Introduction

If there is one thing we can still say about so-called 'classical' music it is that it is constituted around a set of institutional dynamics which can be brought together under the conceptual frame of 'tradition' – the classical tradition, the European tradition, the Austro-German tradition, and so on. What recent debates about the meaning, value and reach of this tradition agree on is that it is a *field* that seems to constitute itself as a group of textual and hermeneutic practices that seem to fit together, point, as it were, in the same direction. This coherence effect, I want to suggest, is a symptom of a certain ideological orientation that has focussed on projecting this 'tradition' as if self-sufficient, as if beholden, in the final analysis, only to its own internal concerns and institutional dynamics, and free from the concerns and vicissitudes of social, political or gender-political concerns. As part of that ideological work, classical music's putative self-reliance masks a fundamentally *relational* structure in which other musics are always present as an (almost) silent Other, held at the margins, disciplined to silence or trotted out in order to secure the tradition through the law of carnivalesque exception.

Since the heady days of the 1980s and early 1990s, when the notion of classical music's universal legibility (or audibility) was fundamentally trashed, classical music seems to have gone into a radical decline (the trashing, I would suggest, was not the cause of this decline, but a symptom of a coming wider redistribution of cultural capital). The recent and now famous 'Weingarten incident', for example, seems for many to have underlined most eloquently the epoch-making shift: in his position piece 'Pearls before breakfast' in the *Washington Post*,[1] Gene Weingarten tells the story of an entrapment in which he managed to persuade Joshua Bell to, '[position] himself against a wall beside a trash basket' in the L'enfant Plaza Metro Station in Washington DC during rush hour on 12 January at 7.51 a.m., and to play for about 40 minutes:

> By most measures, he was nondescript: a youngish white man in jeans, a long-sleeved T-shirt and a Washington Nationals baseball cap. From a small case, he removed a violin. Placing the open case at his feet, he shrewdly threw in a few dollars and pocket change as seed money, swivelled it to face pedestrian traffic, and began to play.

[1] Gene Weingarten, 'Pearls before breakfast', *Washington Post*, Sunday 8 April 2007, W7.

What happened, of course, was that many of the 'middle-brow' workers, most of whom probably worked for the government, passed by without paying Bell much attention. No surprise there. The predetermined outcome, as Richard Taruskin has suggested,[2] was known already to all, and allowed Weingarten to ruminate widely on the American work ethic and the nature of judgement. The key ideological components of the putative 'failure' of the music to attract attention to itself, of course, are martyrological: since historical musicology, like most disciplines, is a dynamic institutional construction with a highly developed instinct for survival, the analysis of such 'failures' among said musicologists rarely if ever ranges past a certain aristocratic tone of disappointment, usually mixed with a misty-eyed religiose imagery and a strong sense of indignation. Adherents of classical music outside the academy invariably share these tendencies to froth and foam at the 'stupidity' of the majority. How could they not stop and listen? What is the *matter* with these people? The countless comments that follow from Weingarten's article online follow this line of exasperated indignation, certainly, but one image that occurs over and over in the comments is that of studied peformative weeping: 'I wept as I read this beautiful article', 'I am weeping as I read this', 'Lets face it: DC bureaucrats are Philistines of the lowest order. Your story made me weep', 'I weep for beauty, whenever I am able to perceive it, and whenever I think I am perceiving it. And I weep for beauty whenever I think it is recognized and whenever I think it isn't', and so on, *ad infinitum*. What is striking in the recurring imagery of 'weeping' at the world's indifference to classical music (the strange archaic ring of the word points to something quite particular here, I think) is the discourse of *suffering* that attaches to it: I mourn this world and its follies; forgive them for they know not what they do. The Marian trope of weeping at the sins of the world, of course, is ancient, and is part of a broader set of archaic cultural resources used in the face of rational discourse against a beloved and precious belief. Weeping, of course, is also densely *gendered*: 'you may well weep like a woman for what you failed to defend as a man', Boabdil's mother is supposed to have declared in 1492 as her son, the last Nasrid ruler of Granada, handed over the keys of the city to the conquering Christian Castilian king. The Marian trope of weeping (in response to the so-called 'seven sorrows' of the Blessed Virgin) works as a way of marking the sorrow of a decline or loss without having to take any responsibility for one's part in the forging of that loss: the public act of weeping (and telling us all that you have wept) thus belongs to a set of conventions that are designed to illicit ritualized compliance with a belief system organized around a defence against a 'sorrow', by which is usually meant a transgression or a falling away from some pre-ordained or righteous path. In this sense, the world of classical music has become a closed symbolic economy of suffering in which its adherents, the faithful, are both burdened with and blessed by their (minority) adherence.

[2] Richard Taruskin, 'The musical mystique: Defending classical music against its devotees', *The New Republic*, 22 October 2007.

What often attends the communities of adherents to classical music in the academy is a certain monasterial culture and a tendency to conceive of modernity 'out there' as something to be held out against at all costs. If there is one thing that classical music has never been able to do, and I would suggest it has deliberately cultivated this disability, it is to insert itself into the noise and speed of modernity. Indeed, *from its very outset*, it has always been (and imagined as being) a kind of island or nature reserve in which delicately sanctioned musical practices and rituals must be preserved, held in place, against the thump and roar of a brash modernity. In short, classical music, undoubtedly one of the greatest achievements of the age of industrialization, has always suffered from agoraphobia. The 'field' or territory of classical music, then, has always been a defensive one, always imagined as under some kind of malign threat from the vernacular horde.

In a recent TV advertising campaign on British terrestrial television for the publicly owned national classical music radio channel, BBC Radio 3 (the so-called 'Step in' campaign by Red Bee Media), members of the public are shown stepping onto a red circle bearing the Radio 3 logo, laid out on the ground like a carpet at various public thoroughfares.[3] The circle is in fact a 'beam of audio' or a 'sound spot' that (ostensibly at least) drowns the world out and envelops those within the circle in the music of, for example, Mendelssohn, Handel, Haydn or Purcell (all Radio 3's 'composers of the year' for 2009). Those inside the sound spot are surprised at first by the sudden ceasing of the roar of the city, but soon appear to fall to the charms of the gentle patter of a Mendelssohn *moto perpetuo*, or a Handel oboe concerto. I am not sure whether the adverts are a conceit or whether the BBC's engineers were, in fact, able to create the aural illusion of an 'island' of quiet in which only classical music reigned, but the point is that the ads play on the notion of classical music as a kind of *retreat* from the noises of the modern city, or from the humdrum of the quotidian. And this is endemic. The traumatic birth of this tradition was always as a response to the anonymity of the unwashed, as a way of marking one's allegiance to something other than the putative mediocrity of the everyday. This music was always already about *exception*. For Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder in 1798, for example, classical music represented an island of light, floating on the unnavigable open spaces of the ordinary, a retreat, a nature reserve, the place of calm, the giver of succour – these are all commonplace figurations of classical music that persist into the present.[4] Within this, of course, runs a deeply

[3] At the time of writing, free-to-view video clips of the campaign were available at both http://www.campaignlive.co.uk/news/897977/BBC-Radio-3-step-world-Red-Bee-Media/ and http://www.bbc.co.uk/composers/stepin/ (both accessed 7 September 2009).

[4] Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, 'sometimes music is for me entirely a picture of our life: – a touchingly brief joy, which arises out of the void and vanishes into the void, – which commences and passes away, why one does not know: a little merry green island, with sunshine, with singing and rejoicing, – which floats upon the dark, unfathomable ocean' ['bald ist die Tonkunst mir ganz ein Bild unsers Lebens: eine rührend kurze Freude, die aus dem Nichts entsteht und ins Nichts vergeht – die anhebt und versinkt, man weiß

held martyrological tendency. Only in the notion of having traversed some kind of awful challenge, some terrible impediment, some dreadful 'sorrow', does classical music come to acquire its gravitas, its status and, paradoxically, its 'soothing' balm-like quality.

What is at stake in the Weingarten affair, and also the counter-Weingartenian imagination of the BBC sound spot, is the very basis on which claims are made for classical music as what Wackenroder called a 'Bild unsers Lebens', a picture of our life, or as what Julian Johnson more recently might have characterized as witness to the continuation of the Enlightenment values.[5] An examination of the status-claims of classical music, then, both as exemplary cultural field and, perhaps even more telling, as exemplary *tradition*, is fundamental to what follows. Yet what, precisely, is this tradition *for*? How does it hold itself together? What are the institutional processes that enable its coherence effect? Social historians of taste have long since recognized in classical music a symptom of a broader tendency in bourgeois culture to split itself in two, as both raging against the old regimes that sought to hold it in check (embracing, that is, economic and political modernity) and simultaneously raging against that same vulgar modernity that would threaten to overrun its own hard-won cultural spaces. That paradox is constitutive of this tradition.

The notion of tradition, then, especially *this* tradition, is bound up with the play of fixity and mobility in cultural practice. Most right-wing imaginations of tradition, especially those haunted by narratives of decline or dissipation (with the possible exception of some libertarian traditions), tend to emphasize those cultural practices in a tradition that hold social relations in place or which instigate new social relations that intensify or mimic existing or older hierarchical social structures. Within this imagination, tradition is an aid to social cohesion (by which conservatives normally mean a maintaining of social difference) by making claims to the universalizing view of a ruling elite. Fundamentalists within this larger grouping are those who would seek to ensure the effectiveness of tradition by concentrating on the traditions' rituals, radicalizing the force of those rituals. What most right-wing (and some left-wing) imaginations of tradition agree on is the notion that tradition can (or should) deliver a self-contained and self-supporting plenitude (if only the rootless effete adherents to modernity would stop

nicht warum: – eine kleine, fröhliche, grüne Insel, mit Sonnenschein mit Gang und Klang – die auf dem dunkeln unergründlichen Ozean schwimmt']. 'Die Wunder der Tonkunst', *Werke und Briefe* (Berlin: Union Verlag, 1984), 309.

[5] 'If classical music causes a certain unease today, it is because it resists a narrow-minded political correctness that smoothes over the very real tensions between egalitarianism and a fundamental human aspiration. Its historical origins are in Enlightenment ideals of universal rights, political democracy, and the inalienable self-determination of the individual.' Julian Johnson, *Who Needs Classical Music? Cultural Choice and Musical Value* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 113.

attacking the tradition).[6] Left-wing imaginations of tradition, no less nostalgic, no less beholden to the seduction of that plenitude, tend to emphasize those cultural practices within a tradition that spring from collectivist endeavours and, ideally, emphasize shared social concerns over differential ones, although there is a strong collectivist tendency in many right-wing constitutions of tradition also. The left-wing imagination of tradition, though, is also beholden to a certain idealizing imagination of human endeavour in which the collective will always have a privileged function over the individual, and it is here that the left's authoritarian tendencies are nurtured. Clearly, then, both left-wing and right-wing imaginations of tradition grasp in their own ways something of the complexity of how cultural practices come to coagulate in this quite specific way around the notion of a tradition. The mechanisms of that coagulation are extremely complex and constitute an agreement between those inside and those outside the tradition that the cultural practices 'inside' *belong* there: and, what is more, they belong there in harmonious agonism-free coexistence with other practices of that same tradition – tradition, conceived in this way, is utopian. Hence, both fans and detractors of classical music agree on the broadest (informal) definitions of classical music and the shape and scope of the tradition is not (fundamentally at least) in question. The contention comes precisely at those points in the formation of a subculture where ideological *attachments* are made. In the introduction to a book I recently co-edited with my colleague Kirsten Gibson, we noted how right-wing conservative thinker Roger Scruton, in his *England: An Elegy*, fetishizes,

> the markers of [his] imagined community: grammar schools, House of Lords, Common Prayer Book, the St. James' Bible, imperial measures, sterling, and so on; they are all somehow connected, as if there were something, to put it in Alan Finlayson's terms, that, "[gave] them cohesion". For Scruton, then, the fetishes all stack up and point in one direction toward some *thing*, as yet (indeed always, deliberately) unnamed, but imputed, suggested, imagined *and produced* in the obsessive–compulsive ordering of the fetishes of the nation. That Thing is the call to order, the call to connect, the call to desire.[7]

Scruton's imagination of England as a kind of tradition-territory, or as a field of objects, works according to a logic of seduction in which fetishes all seem to point to a nameless underside or deep structural principle. Indeed, it is precisely the

[6] Of course, it could be objected, there is also a wide range of right-wing libertarian approaches to tradition that would reject this authoritarian notion of tradition (perhaps, we might add, what right-wing libertarian discourse does is to displace that authoritarian tendency to another register – the 'discipline' of freedom, as it were).

[7] Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson, 'Section Two: Introduction', in I. Biddle and K. Gibson (eds), *Masculinity and Western Musical Practice* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), 135–140: 138. Finlayson quote: Alan Finlayson, 'Psychology, psychoanalysis and theories of nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, 4(2) (1998), 145–162: 154.

unnameable quality of that underside that does the work here. For both left- and right-wing imaginations, tradition, like Scruton's England, is a promised plenitude that can never be delivered, a field that is never complete, a desirous space in which only partially visible attachments govern identification. *Music, Masculinity and the Claims of History* is an attempt to understand these attachments without falling for the charm of the ever more numerous attempts to recuperate classical music from a putative decline. Indeed, far from a revisionist or reparative account of the tradition, this book is written with one aim in mind – to put classical music in its place, in the most literal sense of that phrase.

Richard Middleton has recently claimed, drawing on a famous Lacanian formulation, that, 'there is no pure popular music' and has spoken of the place of the 'hybrid' voice of the people as defined 'in relation to its position within a broader field, within which its starting place (to put it no higher) is always one of subservience'.[8] If the relational matrix that holds the popular voice in place does so in relation to the coordinates of a culture or set of cultural practices to which it must be subservient, then classical music's terrain is surely one of those cultural spaces against which the position of the popular voice is plotted. To put it perhaps more starkly, for classical music, the claims it makes are always *to the detriment* of its lower (and higher) others, always in an antagonistic relationship with them, however many times it might try to give carnivalesque room to one or more vernacular voices. What appears at first to be a simple relational matrix, then, can quickly be shown to open up a much more distributed and/or deterritorialized field in which 'knowing one's place' as Middleton puts it, is not simply a matter of 'lower' cultural practices being co-opted to the dominant cultural sphere, or even of their being held firmly in the position of subservience. It is rather, in the manner Lacan went about putting the master in its place in what he termed the 'discourse of the hysteric',[9] precisely about understanding the master/slave relation of classical and popular musics as both *constitutive* and *representational*: the first articulation (the constitutive nature of power) points to the always already uneven distribution of power within any cultural field; the second recuperates a kind of didactic energy in the field's tendency to want to show itself in all its raw unfettered cruelty. Where constitution might lead us to raise ontological questions about cultural fields, representation points to the always already contestable terms of that unevenness. Therefore, in pointing to a field of dangerous and constitutively radical representations of power that unveil precisely the cruelty and raw self-serving nature of power structures, the analytical curve of any critical attempt to understand classical music's relation to other musics must traverse this stubbornly doubled abyss between being and representation, and thereby bring its relation to its others into visibility.

[8] Richard Middleton, *Voicing the Popular: On the Subjects of Popular Music* (London: Routledge, 2009), 23.

[9] Jacques Lacan, *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Norton, 2006), 164ff.

Understanding tradition as a field of this nature (as always susceptible, that is, to the fragmenting effects of the incommensurateness of ontology and representation), is therefore key to understanding how classical music comes to 'take up' its place in the quietude of the idealized scene of listening. As we shall see in Chapter 1 of this book, the notion of 'fixated listening', so important to the eventual territorialization of concert music in the middle of the nineteenth century, has a short and fragile history. Tradition's plenitude here covers over the efforts of classical musical discourse to hide the fragility of its own ground. In the end, putting classical music in its place will mean pricking its universalizing claims, not by showing them to be flawed or inherently ideological (for what *is not* ideological in this regard?), but by coming to understand them as profoundly *relational*, as reliant on the undergrowth of the vernacular and, as we shall see, reliant also on a densely gendered undergrowth.

The Claims of History

This book is not a history. To say this, however, is not to say that it is *no* history: whenever there is talk of culture, whenever we engage its slipshod and messy work, whenever we dare to reach for a generalization that seeks to hold cultural practices in one place – give them a name, characterize them – we are inevitably involved in some kind of *historicizing*. To say this, then, is to say something about the nature of historical work: it is not something that operates only when we name it and, conversely, it is not something that is adequately nameable. Historical work runs through every scientism, every creationism, every agnosticism, every atheism; each world system has some kind of history, some notion of what the past might be and how it might be engaged. In this sense, whether I like it or not, history is all over this book. Slavoj Žižek has drawn a particularly suggestive distinction between what he terms 'historicity' and 'historicism'. The latter we can understand (especially in its so-called New Historicist articulation) as a way of trying to understand the meanings of a text by emphasizing the context of its exegesis, the terms and currencies of its imagery, the manner in which it would have circulated in its own contemporaneous milieu. For Žižek, this attempt at divining some kind of situated (contingent) truth is predicated on a pathological need to overemphasize particularity and difference, to the detriment of other qualities that might also intervene in a 'text's' meaning (meant here in the broadest sense): history, for Žižek, is posited in this modality as a chain of differentiated local moments, each located and specific to itself, each, in some sense, autonomous from the others, of equal weight and value, 'relativized'.[10] This constitutes for Žižek a thinning out or a 'flattening' of historical work. He contrasts this practice with what he calls 'historicity', a term he uses to describe a way of doing history

[10] Slavoj Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor* (London: Verso, 1991), 101.

that holds on to what he terms the 'ahistorical kernel of the Real':[11] 'The paradox is thus that historicity differs from historicism by the way it presupposes some traumatic kernel which endures as "the same", non-historical; and so various historical epochs are conceived as failed attempts to capture this kernel'.[12] The historical is brought into a relation here with the 'non-historical': history can only ever come to know itself by entering into a relationship with its Other(s). Žižek's conception of historicity thus offers a way of thinking about the past that is always in some sense engaged with that which most historically oriented scholarships dare not name, the logical deduction of the fact that the past is neither an undiscovered country nor the site of intimate memories (neither exotic nor home), but a disturbing third term that unsteadies and disrupts the neat distinctions we draw between presence and absence (hence a traumatic 'kernel'). Any claim to historical details, truth, fact or facticity, is thus always already susceptible for Žižek to a slippage fired by the desire of the writers and readers of history, fired, that is, by their attachment to the enjoyment of narrating, or being narrated at, to the push and shove of the story-telling. This is not simply what has been termed so-called 'postmodern history'. Quite the contrary, in fact: Žižek insists that the writing of history is *precisely always* about attachment, always about a coming into a relation with something and about taking stock of the mechanisms (both conscious and unconscious) by which that relation is forged.

Žižek is thus able to offer a way of thinking about the past that is in some sense partially ahistorical, insofar as historicism as such cannot account for the meanings of a text or cultural practice in their totality and there is always a surplus or excess to the historicist interpretation that cannot be hidden indefinitely. So what might it mean, in the light of this, to say that this book is *not* a history? And how might we respond to the incitement to rethink our relation with the past encapsulated in Žižek's notion of historicity? In trying to answer this set of questions, I will make two brief propositions.

1. First, it is useful to engage a 'historicity' that is open-ended (but not ideologically naïve) and does not fix or stabilize the nature of the relationship between primary and secondary texts: in so doing I want to loosen (and question) the claims music-historicism makes on the field of historical musicology by staging, out in the open, what might be termed the dance of interpretation. This staging, then, is constituted for me in an examination of the processes by which authors and readers make connections between different kinds of evidence, sift and order them and draw conclusions from them. That staging, furthermore, ought to open the reading of music history to a number of liberating and politically productive strategies that should make room again for the *activist* scholar. In short, this process ought to mark a shift from a covert, more or less ethnographically centred,

[11] Žižek, *Enjoyment*, 101.

[12] Ibid., 102.

methodology (what Kramer some time ago, in his now famous debate with Gary Tomlinson, diagnosed as Tomlinson's 'God trick of modern epistemology')[13] towards an explicitly *political* practice in which one's attachments to and investments in the discipline of historical musicology are played out as a site of both enjoyment (desire, habituation, ritual) and antagonism. The writing of history in this manner should thus bear the mark of this doubled positioning, as always already in dialogue with itself.

2. Second, and perhaps even more important for us here, I want, as it were, to *blaspheme* against a particularly sacred norm of historical inquiry, against, that is, the notion that the past (imagined more or less as a kind of 'field') can, in some sense at least, be read (however problematically) as having a constitutively antagonistic relation to the present. Only if one give oneself up to the epistemological strictures of that past, so the historicist assertion runs, can one hope to understand the immutable alien-ness of the past. In short, the tendency in music-historical scholarship after New Historicism to an intensification of inter-textual complexity and an ever more fragmented body of evidence has led also to an intensification of the God trick of ethnography such that fields, sites and investments get folded into each other in a bipolar frenzy of cultural distantiation and intimacy. The nature and scope of this God trick in the writing of history may lie at the level of the unconscious attachments and identifications, but its effects on the institutional status of musicology and, more generally, intellectual enquiry about music, have been to tighten the disciplinary (which is to say conservative) grip. What I propose here is a set of moves designed to disturb the recently retrenched historicism of historical musicology and thereby to place the questioning of the historical encounter (for the writing of history is nothing if not the staging of an encounter) into a productive relation with now classic critiques of ethnography (and, by implication, historicism).[14] Moves like the one I am proposing have often been sidelined or reduced in musicology to the figure of a methodological hand-wringing, or held up as a kind of exception that thereby proves the rule that scholarship should never be about the pleasures, attachments or desires of the author, but always beholden to the structures of narration demanded by the discipline. I want to suggest, however, that methodological questions can never be fundamentally banished from the work of history since it is, by its very nature, a disrupted and disrupting field that is never still, never closed.

[13] Lawrence Kramer, 'Music criticism and the postmodernist turn: In contrary motion with Gary Tomlinson', *Current Musicology* 53 (1993), 25–35: 32.

[14] See Patricia Clough, *The End(s) of Ethnography: From Realism to Social Criticism* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998).

It was, indeed, Donna Haraway who, nearly 20 years ago, showed, echoing Nietzsche and Spinoza, that, in order to blaspheme against something, one must first hold it to be dear. For her, this was:

> an effort to build an ironic political myth faithful to feminism, socialism, and materialism. Perhaps more faithful as blasphemy is faithful, than as reverent worship and identification. Blasphemy has always seemed to require taking things very seriously. I know no better stance to adopt from within the secular-religious, evangelical traditions of United States politics, including the politics of socialist feminism. Blasphemy protects one from the moral majority within, while still insisting on the need for community. Blasphemy is not apostasy. Irony is about contradictions that do not resolve into larger wholes, even dialectically, about the tension of holding incompatible things together because both or all are necessary and true. Irony is about humour and serious play. It is also a rhetorical strategy and a political method, one I would like to see more honoured within socialist-feminism.[15]

How contemporary and urgent this blasphemy still seems: rarely, over the last 20 years, have we really dealt with the tension between abandonment and attachment that inevitably attends any critical turn. This is a key motivation of this book, a desire to test the limits of that discourse I hold most dear and have spent most of my adult life grappling with – music history. I do this from a perspective one might term, in the manner outlined by Haraway above, blasphemous. The terms of this blasphemy, its reach and the attitudes against which it blasphemes are not set in place in this book with aimless open-ended play in mind. As Haraway demonstrates, play of the kind entailed by blasphemy is deadly serious, politically committed and in a very real sense, 'true' to that against which it blasphemes. In a recent article, Santiago Fouz-Hernández and I posited a model for understanding the continuum of attachments and abandonments we termed the *blasphemy continuum*.[16] Although that article was ostensibly dealing with a particularly rapid transition from a patrician (fascist) to a free market (capitalist) society in Spain, I think it is worth noting here the extent to which critical relations with one's disciplinary 'home' are always in some sense both hysterical (the 'what do you want of me' of disciplinarity) and proprietorial, both relational and locational.

[15] Donna Haraway, 'A cyborg manifesto: Science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century', *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), 149–181: 149.

[16] Ian Biddle and Santiago Fouz-Hernández, 'Voicing gender: Transgender performance and the national imaginary in the Spanish cinema of the democratic era', in Robert Stone and Lisa Shaw (eds), *Screening Songs in Hispanic and Lusophone Cinema* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming).

The Way In

The blasphemy I want to enact in this book is connected to queerness and queer*ing*. To queer, of course, is to bend, distort, problematize, but it is not to commit simply to a destructive play with no end, no meaning, no politics: the commitment to malleability, to shifting meanings around, to problematizing classical music's universalizing claims, is also nonetheless still a commitment to those operations, and to the *work* of queering. To queer the Austro-German nineteenth century in the manner I set out in this book is also, therefore, to queer musicological disciplinarity since it was in that century that Guido Adler conceived his schema for *Musikwissenschaft*, and it was in that century that the term 'homosexual' was first coined in medical discourse, preceding (and grounding) the term 'heterosexual'. The project of this book, then, is to examine some of the ways in which these two moments might be written together, and the consequences this writing might have for our understanding of gender. Gender and sexuality, mutually imbricated in each other, represent, as I have shown elsewhere, two different operations of discourse about sex, two different ways of structuring relations of power.[17] To queer these relations is to refuse a 'pure' methodological historicism, although its strategic employment will prove useful. Queering, by its very nature, cannot hold true to historicism since the queer is always reaching for a political outcome that radically outstrips the explicit (disciplinary) demands of writing history.

So where should this queering begin? How should we set off with its blasphemy in mind? One way might be to revisit a certain disciplinary primal scene, the first of many encounters with the very strangeness of our discipline: it is, for many of my generation (perhaps more than will admit it openly), as if musicology, this slight, fragmented and debilitated discipline, were like a well-guarded gentlemen's club (Susan McClary referred to it as a kind of 'priesthood'[18]), radically mismatched to us, alien, uncanny even. To be sure, all institutions are like this – they are beholden to a set of strange rituals, guard their integrity by assiduously filtering access to them and only open themselves up to would-be entrants through a painfully complex set of threshold rituals. Like Franz Kafka's man from the country in the 1919 parable 'Before the Law' ['Vor dem Gesetz'], who comes to the 'gatekeeper' of the Law, seeking admission to it, would-be entrants to musicology are confounded not just by that first doorkeeper, but by a series of doorkeepers whose fierceness is but an overture to the fierceness of the next, and for whom the blasphemies we pose in and of ourselves (our ontological blasphemy of youth, if you will) are to be held in

[17] Ian Biddle, 'Of mice and dogs: Music, gender and sexuality at the long fin de siècle', in Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton (eds), *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 215–226.

[18] Susan McClary, 'The blasphemy of talking politics during Bach year', in Richard Leppert and Susan McClary (eds), *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance, and Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 13–62: 17.

indefinite abeyance as pointless distractions from the task of attending the door.[19] Until very recently (and even now), most of those doorkeepers were men, and men of a certain sexual orientation, a certain race, a certain class and a certain age. The outsiders of musicology have been consistently marked and delineated as such: openly gay men (men, that is, who speak openly of their sexuality and draw it into their field of scholarly vision); women who seek to draw attention to their always already problematic status in the field; black, Asian, native American, Hispanic or otherly raced scholars who will not remain silent about their other-racedness; all these, and many more, are disturbances in the quiet patrician field of musicology and are more often than not still treated as such. Still the American music academy is dominated by a disproportionately upper class (in the US sense of the term) faculty and the British sector is similarly dominated by products forged in tradition-bound, expensive, fee-paying schools. I draw attention to this tweedocracy because its members' over-representation in the academy is precisely what sustains musicology's agoraphobia. These are the doorkeepers who claim to have made a *rapprochement* with the 'others' of musicology, but anyone with even the most anecdotal knowledge of the racial, class, gender or sexuality bias of musicology faculty in the English-speaking world, for example, will be struck by how much like the early 1960s it all still looks.

On the whole, musicology has remained stubbornly patrilineal, stubbornly white, heteronormative and privileged, and is modelled on a system of male patronage that is still largely intact even when the gender balance of academic staff seems at last to be shifting painfully slowly towards a more equitable gender distribution. The monolithic compulsory masculinity of earlier forms of musicology is certainly in profound crisis, but rumours of its death have been greatly exaggerated. What is more, musicology remains one of the few places in the Anglophone academy where attention to the text is held to be of more importance than attention to our state of being in the world, where our ideological commitments are commonly buried under a putatively dispassionate scholarship, and where there are still innumerable opportunities to proclaim loudly the superiority of 'high' bourgeois culture over other cultural forms without embarrassment. When

[19] 'Vor dem Gesetz steht ein Türhüter. Zu diesem Türhüter kommt ein Mann vom Lande und bittet um Eintritt in das Gesetz. Aber der Türhüter sagt, daß er ihm jetzt den Eintritt nicht gewähren könne. Der Mann überlegt und fragt dann, ob er also später werde eintreten dürfen. "Es ist möglich", sagt der Türhüter, "jetzt aber nicht". Da das Tor zum Gesetz offensteht wie immer und der Türhüter beiseite tritt, bückt sich der Mann, um durch das Tor in das Innere zu sehn. Als der Türhüter das merkt, lacht er und sagt: "Wenn es dich so lockt, versuche es doch, trotz meines Verbotes hineinzugehn. Merke aber: Ich bin mächtig. Und ich bin nur der unterste Türhüter. Von Saal zu Saal stehn aber Türhüter, einer mächtiger als der andere. Schon den Anblick des dritten kann nicht einmal ich mehr ertragen".' Franz Kafka, 'Vor dem Gesetz', in Max Brod (ed.), *Erzählungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, [1919] 1998), 120; trans. and ed. by Gabriel Josipovici as 'Before the law', in *Collected Stories* (London: Everyman Library, 1993), 173–174: 173.

we first approached this musicology as young hopefuls, like Kafka's man from the country, we were always ready to believe that it could be changed, made more like us once we were inside. Yet the doorkeepers have proven remarkably committed and their number greater than we ever dared anticipate.[20] For each one of us who are lucky enough to have jobs, and who have been given a small degree of recognition within the discipline, there are countless others who have been held at arm's length, held in an infantilized hysterical half-in/half-out position. Indeed, the relation among tenured and non-tenured staff in the US academy is an extreme symptom of a rigid global class system in the music academy that distinguishes rigidly between insiders and outsiders.[21]

Some of the brightest, most radical minds of our discipline have been made to wait an eternity, expecting entrance at any time, waiting for that moment when they are ushered into the inner sanctum. So it is for Kafka's man from the country:

> Before [the man from the country] dies, all his experiences in these long years gather themselves in his head to one point, a question he has not yet asked the doorkeeper. He waves him nearer, since he can no longer raise his stiffening body. The doorkeeper has to bend low toward him, for the difference in height between them has altered much to the man's disadvantage. "What do you want to know now?" asks the doorkeeper; "you are insatiable". "Everyone strives to reach the Law", says the man, "so how does it happen that for all these many years no one but myself has ever begged for admittance?" The doorkeeper recognizes that the man has reached his end, and, to let his failing senses catch the words, roars in his ear: "No one else could ever be admitted here, since this gate was made only for you. I am now going to shut it."[22]

[20] For Kafka's man from the country, the doorkeepers function as bars to entry, as wills to which the man must bend: 'Solche Schwierigkeiten hat der Mann vom Lande nicht erwartet; das Gesetz soll jedem und immer zugänglich sein, denkt er, aber als er jetzt den Türhüter in seinem Pelzmantel genauer ansieht, seine große Spitznase, den langen, dünnen, schwarzen tatarischen Bart, entschließt er sich, doch lieber zu warten, bis er die Erlaubnis zum Eintritt bekommt. Der Türhüter gibt ihm einen Schemel und läßt ihn seitwärts von der Tür sich niedersetzen.' 'Vor dem Gesetz', 173.

[21] For a detailed analysis of the low-wage economy of the American academy, see Marc Bousquet, *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-wage Nation* (New York: New York University Press, 2008). Despite some telling differences between the US and other Anglophone systems, there are some striking similarities in class designation and treatment of part-time and hourly paid staff.

[22] 'Vor seinem Tode sammeln sich in seinem Kopfe alle Erfahrungen der ganzen Zeit zu einer Frage, die er bisher an den Türhüter noch nicht gestellt hat. Er winkt ihm zu, da er seinen erstarrenden Körper nicht mehr aufrichten kann. Der Türhüter muß sich tief zu ihm hinunterneigen, denn der Größenunterschied hat sich sehr zuungunsten des Mannes verändert. "Was willst du denn jetzt noch wissen?" fragt der Türhüter, "du bist unersättlich". "Alle streben doch nach dem Gesetz", sagt der Mann, "wieso kommt es, daß in den vielen Jahren niemand außer mir Einlaß verlangt hat?" Der Türhüter erkennt, daß der

The elegance of Franz Kafka's short 'parable' lies in part in its delicate, but for that no less debilitating, logic: each doorkeeper is there for the specific purpose of preventing *your* access. The door is for *you* and it will be closed without ceremony when *you* pass away. *You* are the subject of the Law and *your* externality to it is what gives the Law its substance. The Law is, so to speak, something you encounter as an Other, as something which is empty, and yet as something that has form, substance. It is barred to you and you from it and your externality to it is experienced as an anxiety, a lack, as something you seek to possess and which stands within tantalizing reach and yet always already deferred, always already *beyond* you. The neurotic logic of this parable (why does this always happen to me?) is not what is most interesting about it but, rather, the picture it draws of the debilitating operation of discursive power on subjects seeking to wield that power. So, how does discourse on music (the 'law' it puts in place) hold itself together and who are the victims of that composure?

With this question in mind, one way to read this short fragment by Kafka is as a parable of encounter: in encountering the Law, the man from the country encounters a system which pre-exists him, the rules and codes of which are not yet known to him. 'Che vuoi?' as Lacan puts it in his fifth *Seminar*: what is it that the Law wants of me? The Big Other, that which we encounter as an ideal but which is always constituted in a lack (the gap between what we think the Big Other represents and that Other's formidable materiality), occasions the question of the barred subject (the subject before its encounter with that Big Other) by representing itself as something whole, something complete and self-sufficient, and yet impenetrable, empty, simultaneously *whole* and *deficient*. The consequences of the structure of this encounter can be far-reaching and offer ways of understanding how it is that we become subjects of ideology and how we are structured by the discourses we seek to engage. Kafka's tale also resonates for me with one of the most extraordinary moments in musicological discourse, Susan McClary's engagement with the threshold and with the figure of Judith in the Bluebeard myth in her *Feminine Endings*. Kafka's tale can be read as a distant retelling of that myth. Judith, the intellectually precocious and curious new wife of Bluebeard, is forbidden to look behind the last of seven doors, which holds the dark secret as to the true nature of her husband. The desire for what lies behind that seventh door is Judith's undoing: in Bartók's opera version of the myth, as McClary points out,[23] Judith is imprisoned with Bluebeard's other ghostly wives as punishment for her transgression. In Kafka's 'reworking' or very distant retelling, the threshold functions in a very different way: like Judith, the man from the country is brought to the threshold by his precociousness, but unlike

Mann schon an seinem Ende ist, und, um sein vergehendes Gehör noch zu erreichen, brüllt er ihn an: "Hier konnte niemand sonst Einlaß erhalten, denn dieser Eingang war nur für dich bestimmt. Ich gehe jetzt und schließe ihn".' Ibid., 173–174.

[23] Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender and Sexuality* (Minnesota, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 4.

Judith, the man from the country has to contend with a gatekeeper *in praesentia* who *mediates* between him and the Law. Unlike Judith, the man from the country in Kafka's parable never crosses the threshold: his death is neither punishment nor closure; he dies unfulfilled, infantilized. The man lacks agency. His demise is framed within anxieties, therefore, not about intellectual precociousness but about a fatal absence of agency: it would seem that the very same quality that causes Judith's demise is what is missing in the man from the country, and that lack of precocious agency brings the man to his slow decline; the excessive virility of the doorkeeper is explicitly contrasted with the impotence of the petitioner, who sits quietly by his side, agitating only very rarely, and who descends eventually into senility and, ultimately, death.

The differences between the two stories are very telling and their gendering is a marker of a dynamic in which we are still implicated: our relationship to discourse (the Law, the interdiction preceding the opening of the doors in Bluebeard's castle) is structured (though *by no means* immutably) by a complex set of identifications and desires which rely to a considerable extent on old and oppressive gender ideologies. That these can and should be changed is clear, but we must not lull ourselves into believing that the time for change has already been and gone and that we can now relax since we are all comfortably 'post-feminist': this is the very same point that McClary makes in *Feminine Endings* and it is as true today as it was then.[24] It is from this principle that this book proceeds and on which many subsequent claims in it are built: we have only just begun to understand how our gender intervenes in our scholarly practice and how, furthermore, music is used as a resource in our continued gendering. In Kafka's parable, the man from the country approaches the Law as one who seeks to identify with it, with its operators, its mediators, its gatekeepers. The terror of that encounter is as one who encounters the gap between what one *wishes to be* and what one *is*, or as the gap between one's ego imago and the radical alterity of that Big Other. Like so many academics who, at their first conference, at their first encounter with a great 'father' of the discourse, experience debilitating anxiety and become dumbstruck (this was certainly my experience), the man from the country stands as the exemplary impotent, a figure of men's horror at failure to identify with, to emulate, masculine discourse.

Judith, on the other hand, approaches her threshold as, although *already structured* by the Law (like the man from the country), also *already structured* by the retribution which will follow the opening of the seventh door. She has to bear the terrible consequences of breaking that Law and stands as testament to the limits of what the Law will stand:

[24] 'If musicology has lagged behind in admitting feminist criticism to its list of legitimate areas of enquiry, it is way ahead of the game in its efforts to expunge all evidence that feminism ever existed.' McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 6.

> As a woman in musicology, I find myself thinking about Judith quite often – especially now, as I begin asking new kinds of questions about music with the aid of feminist critical theory. Like Judith, I have been granted access by my mentors to an astonishing cultural legacy: musical repertoires from all of history and the entire globe, repertoires of extraordinary beauty, power, and formal sophistication. It might be argued that I ought to be grateful, since there has really only been one stipulation in the bargain – that I never ask what any of it means, that I content myself with structural analysis and empirical research.[25]

The Law which McClary has already broken, that Law which forbids her to peer behind that seventh door of musicology, is constituted in the interdiction born of a politics of gender so profound, so deeply embedded, that its engagement is terrifying and dangerous: for behind that door lies all the detritus of institutional musicological ideology, heaped up like so many pyres, so many blocks to academic appointments, so many glass ceilings, mutterings about the worthlessness of 'women's music' and scornful dismissals of gender-interested scholarship; we find here all the destroyed careers, like Bluebeard's former wives, to which McClary could at any point have been assigned. The dangerous predicament of a Judith, about to be assigned any minute to oblivion, is a predicament with which most female readers of this volume will be familiar, and with which many pro-feminist male readers will also no doubt want to identify.

It is not just the professional doorkeepers that block women's access to the 'Law' of musicology (by which we might understand here its operative tendencies, what it permits us to say about music), but that Law itself which is constructed with women's marginalization in mind. For Judith, the Law *precedes* her transgression and is already in place: it is there to structure her and to ensure that she transgress (in many versions of the tale she is shown the seventh door and given the key to it). Women are barred from crossing over into the centre precisely by this pre-structuring: they are 'always already' gendered in the academy by virtue of the 'problem' they constitute – as member of a 'minority' that is nonetheless a majority, as an outsider that is nonetheless inside, an Other that must be assimilated but which resists, a threat to the Law whilst constituting its Other and therefore grounding it. In all this, the Law of musicology *continues* to figure women as profoundly alien to itself.

If feminism has achieved anything (and it has achieved a great deal), it is the drawing into explicit consciousness and, crucially, into the political everyday, of gender as cultural and critical category. In *this* sense, my own work is feminist. Yet this is not an easy claim to substantiate. One might ask how I can engage feminism when, by its very nature, it seeks appropriately to emphasize the centrality of female experience to its political project. One might further ask whether men can ever speak for/as women/woman. To demonstrate the complexities of these questions, imagine any putatively feminist statement one might make in the

[25] McClary, *Endings*, 4.

following manner: men, with very few exceptions, have access to the means of production and women have more restricted access to those means and are, on average, less prosperous than men. The aim here, of course, is to point out the continued curtailed access women have to the public economy. Yet, when spoken by a man especially, the use of the third person plural present indicative here – 'have', 'are' – sketches out what Saul Kripke once called a 'rigid designator': in (apparently) uncritically characterizing the position of woman/women as 'simply' lesser, in sketching out the structure of oppression *yet again*, the male voice thereby effects a situation in which that structure becomes even more fixed, even more 'quilted' into our experiences through the process of repetition: 'women are different', 'women are inferior', 'women are Other' – say it often enough and it will become true, even if it is meant as a critical diagnosis.[26] When the wielder of the discourse is male, the critical force of the illocutionary moment is often dissipated, always already tainted: so how am I to speak of woman/women without co-opting her subject position or objectifying her? How can I go about doing feminist work without falling into the discursive trap of illocutionary misogyny? Are these habits, which are often so ingrained as to appear immutable, really susceptible to destabilization?

Feminism, of course, is far from a unitary body of thought and, like all intellectual traditions, it is fractured and beset by both internal and external debates. The relationship between those traditions and men has been dealt with in some detail, most notably, perhaps, in Alice Jardine and Paul Smith's now classic collection *Men in Feminism* (1987). As Stephen Heath makes clear in his essay in that collection, 'men have a necessary relation to feminism […] and that relation is also one of a certain exclusion'.[27] Since then, the nature and possible scope of that relation has become perhaps even more contested: the rise in the 1990s of men's studies in the humanities and social sciences could be seen as part of men's attempts to colonize feminism, to yet again attempt to grab a discursive position, to put themselves centre stage. As Bryce Traister has eloquently shown, the interest in men as objects of study has had the effect of '[crowding] out the women and texts responsible for the rise of feminism … and [returning] the man to a humanity whose historicized particularity nonetheless shifts … cultural criticism, once again, in to the dominant study of malekind'.[28] This re-marginalization of the feminine, and the tendency in what Traister terms 'phallocriticism' to uncritically represent heterosexual masculinity as the ground upon which all masculinities are built, has resulted, it would seem, from an uncritical and essentially narcissistic tendency in

[26] Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980). For a useful and subtle account of Kripke's concept, see Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), 72.

[27] Stephen Heath, 'Male feminism', in Alice Jardine and Paul Smith (eds), *Men in Feminism* (London: Routledge, 1987), 1–32: 1.

[28] Bryce Traister, 'Academic viagra: The rise of American masculinity studies', *American Quarterly*, 52(2) (June 2000), 274–304: 276.

masculinity studies (especially, but not exclusively, studies of heterosexual men by heterosexual men) to reproduce the power relations that feminism in its most radical moments sought, and continues to seek, to overturn.

Conversely, the rise of men's studies could be viewed as a crucial step in the realization of a productively feminist outcome – by urging men to engage in the kinds of self-analysis that formed a central task of the feminist project, feminism and men's studies together might get closer to a world in which gender does not and cannot form the grounds from which to denigrate disciplinary Others. Clearly, since this is a book about men, it will come as no surprise that I favour this second position, not simply because it serves my purposes here, but because, as many forms of even the most radical feminism have shown, men's engagement with feminist thought is a crucial step in the transformation of the power relations between men and women, as important, perhaps, as the emergence of feminism itself. The blasphemy which this book enacts, then, is constituted in the attempt it represents to hold this problematic of male subjectivity and critical gender work at the front of the writing, to embed it into the very texture of how I might be able to address the power relations at work in gender hierarchies. The logics of this book will sometimes therefore appear strange or circular, open-ended, playful. I have adopted a way of writing for this book that is consistently self-analysing, drawing the reader in circles around the materials, in and out of historical, analytical and speculative modalities, always taken up with the question of gender and ideology. The writing interleaves the exposition of contemporary theoretical paradigms with primary sources, juxtaposes types of texts and makes them work off each other through often undisciplined and unsystematic play. I begin each chapter with a number of questions, which work as a set of coordinates that sketch out its terrain. The writing is thus also somewhat playful in places – where I get close to a source it infects me, takes me up and uses me, spins me around and shakes me up. When I regain my composure I am more sober, more distanced from it and its shapes and trajectories emerge for me in the spaces between possession and self-possession. How queer.

Chapter 1
Discourse Channels: Listening as a Cultural–Historical Category in the Austro-German *Frühromantik*

> *[In romantic criticism] we are faced, at once, with a fatal confusion between two selves: the one specific, particular, historical, and chaotic, the other capable of the lofty lucidity of total self-understanding. The gap between the two is so wide as to have become comically proverbial.*[1]
>
> (Paul de Man)

> *The nineteenth-century campaign to raise music to [a] lonely, sacred eminence was an exacting one, almost against nature. Undivided silent attention to a musical performance does violence to basic human impulses, among the most devout listeners as among the unlettered.*[2]
>
> (Peter Gay)

> *Word is that the German Idealists and Romantics were dreamy folk whose hearts leapt up when they beheld a rainbow in the sky. So they were. Yet in their own estimation the leap was always as much a result of a nervous disturbance in the heart muscle as of euphoria.*[3]
>
> (David Farrell Krell)

Prelude

The queer is all about excess, so we are often told: it runs away from us, returns without leave, makes itself felt rudely, loudly, impossibly. Its figures of speech are mired in redundancy, exaggeration, wastefulness. And tautology, hyperbole, repetition are all markers of the symbolic economies of the German-speaking early romantics. Both here and in the queer, redundancy and figurative overdetermination often go hand in hand. Perhaps, then, romanticism *is* a kind of

[1] Paul de Man, *Romanticism and Contemporary Criticism: The Gauss Seminar and Other Papers*, ed. by E. S. Burt, Kevin Newmark and Andrzej Warminski (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1993), 27.

[2] Peter Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience from Victoria to Freud*, *Volume IV: The Naked Heart* (New York: Norton, 1995), 22.

[3] David Farrell Krell, *Contagion: Sexuality, Disease and Death in German Idealism and Romanticism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 1.

queer. Or perhaps it is better to say that the romantic makes space for the queer, sets in motion the conditions for its possibility. Moreover, for the romantics to represent the world in words, sounds and images was to be burdened by the materiality of the medium itself (words, marks, sounds, images) that cut across the act of representation like a fleshy remainder, an indulgence, a baroque supplement. And this dread of the material has been played out both in what Sophie Fuller and Lloyd Whitesell have termed 'queer episodes' in music history[4] and in the various forms of romantic criticism long after that set of literary conventions had had its day. Romantic criticism after romanticism has been touched, on the one hand, by a certain over-heated interpretative trajectory (in an identification with the romantic 'predicament', as it were) and, on the other, by a certain detached analytical coolness, as if the 'heat' of the object of study necessitated a certain 'safe' distance. The dread of the material makes itself felt in particular in the dread of the particular, and in a dread, more precisely, of the collapse of what Friedrich Kittler has termed the universal address (and addressee) of romantic poetry.[5] And yet, in the wake of this dread came also a certain playfulness, an openness to the joy of transgression, of seepage, of washing away, of contagion, a queerish sensibility that delighted in the hyperbole of dread, the excesses of suffering, the play of bodies denied their objects of pleasure. The queer, resolutely plural and peripheral, is afforded by the romantics the position of the exotic, like a spectacularized body of suffering, performatively produced in weeps, sighs and stolen glances. Same-sex intimacy, then, is covered in the early romantic symbolic economy in this veil of strangeness. The structural positioning of queer as a proxy for excess also brings it into an intimate (hidden) relationship with romantic attempts to enact a universal address: excess stands also for liquidity, for flow, for the movement of meaning, for translatability and mobility, all of which are the very conditions for the romantic address. As we shall see in this chapter, it is this address, this grand channelling of meaning, that occupied the romantics and which fundamentally shaped their understanding of music. To put it in its crudest structural terms: what threatened to weaken or otherwise undermine the solidity of the channel of universal address occasioned the disciplinary intervention of the author, and that intervention was inevitably about producing a *literary excess*.

The queer, then, the excessive, the wasteful, the hyperbolic, is constitutive of this moment. Romanticism, we might say, is a queer episode. Romantic criticism has always been about managing a certain bifurcation. For Paul de Man, it is the criticism on Friedrich Hölderlin in particular that plays out the tension between fierce identification with the poet and a radical theology of detachment, between the hagiography of the lucid 'self-understanding' prophet and the capture of the chaotic-historical figure of the poet *in the world*. The tendency of

[4] Sophie Fuller and Lloyd Whitesell (eds), *Queer Episodes in Music and Modern Identity* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois, 2002).

[5] Friedrich Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, trans. by Michael Metteer, with Chris Cullens (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 73.

romantic criticism to both estrange itself from and mimic its object is nowhere more apparent for de Man than here. For him, the critics wheel in grand circles around the delicate obscurity of late Hölderlin, whilst also picking through the *altertumswissenschaftlich* or 'philological' question of the poems' constitution (elisions, order, punctuation). The duality revisits perhaps *the* epistemological problematic of romantic criticism, encapsulated in this question: should we engage Romanticism (with an upper case R) as a coherent world, a symbolic economy that can sustain itself, or should we instead ground romanticism (with a lower case r) in its material specificities, connect it to places, people, times, specific *material* economies? As de Man would have it, the choice for the critic of literary romanticism is that between the historicist and the hermeneutic methods, between the 'empirical self of the author and the self that appears as the speaking voice in the work'.[6] In what follows I explore the limits of romantic criticism and try to think both Romanticism and romanticism as a set of productive critical topoi. This is, in the manner I outlined in the Introduction, a blasphemous undertaking in that I remain resolutely open to what is recoverable as queer in romanticism.

The focus here is on the 'early' romantic understanding of listening as a cultural–historical category in German-speaking Europe, concentrating on the first 10 years of the nineteenth century. What follows is an analysis of the symbolic economies that feed conceptions of listening, especially (although not exclusively) listening *to music*. What is most striking in these German-language literary and philosophical accounts of music and listening to music from the first decade(s) of the nineteenth century is the extent to which they dramatize men's intense identification with listening subjectivity and, conversely, the danger thereby entered into by those men who listen since, as we shall see, listening was also marked in these symbolic economies as 'feminizing'. Listening here marks out an ambiguous space into which a number of dissident gender formations were able to rush. Indeed, listening, we might say, opens up queer space.

Into the Water with Hölderlin

Friedrich Hölderlin, who lived the romantic fabulous ('fabelhaft' or fable-like) distinction of the 'mad' poet, seemed to embody, after his removal to an asylum in Tübingen in 1806, a state of exotic strangeness that fascinated his contemporaries and ensured his enshrinement in the romantic pantheon of secular saints, alongside many other romantic outsiders, as both an exotic and a kind of exemplar of poetic subjectivity. This early romantic hagiography is recoverable in the terms of my blasphemy here as in some sense queer, since it points to a tendency in the German literature on Hölderlin to think him as an impossible amalgam, *but to think him nonetheless*. This queer thinking is sanctioned and mirrored also by Hölderlin's near contemporary, Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, in his employment of the

[6] de Man, *Romanticism and Contemporary Criticism*, 25.

figure of the 'naked saint' in his 1799 *Phantasien über die Kunst für Freunde der Kunst*. These and other hagiographies demonstrate a fascination in the work of the early German-language romantics for pathology, 'sickness' and incompleteness, especially in the construction of the 'madman' lost to reason; and yet they also find something beguiling, productive, useful even in that madness, as if a way of living that is in some sense 'unnatural' were able to furnish the most brilliant of insights into being. This paradox is not simply available to a queer appropriation, but is, I suggest, *constitutively queer*, which is to say it is constitutively disruptive of the emergent hegemonic bourgeois gender formations of the German-speaking lands of the late Napoleonic era. It thus occasioned (and, what is more, continues to occasion) a response that might be characterized as a disciplinary marginalization. In this regard, what is radical in Hölderlin, Wackenroder, Tieck, Novalis, Hoffman et al. is the refusal their work enacts to allow the disciplinary muting of the madman and its insistence on holding the noise of his madness within earshot. Wackenroder might as well have been speaking of Hölderlin himself here in this elevation of 'madness' to the status of a kind of disturbing wisdom:

> The Orient is the home of everything wondrous. Amidst the antiquity and childlike simplicity of attitudes there, one also finds very strange signs and puzzles which present a problem to the mind that considers itself to be more clever. Strange beings often dwell in the wilderness there, beings whom we would call insane, who are however worshipped there as supernatural beings.[7]

These states of Hölderlinian estrangedness, raised up or transformed states of consciousness, sometimes attend the figuration of music in the late Napoleonic period by marking the act of listening as a kind of *safe madnes*s, an *exploratory* (and therefore reversible) loss of the self to a chaotic inner world, a 'touching' of what I will be terming in this chapter the generality of 'discourse flow' or universal address. As we shall see, this is a notion, propounded by some German philosophers and poets around 1800, that 'discourse' (that is, address, public language, statements 'in the open', as it were) operates as in some sense *liquid*, that it seeks out addressees *without end*. The 'madness' trope attached to the image of Hölderlin, anticipated by Wackenroder in the figure of the naked saint, is engaged as a way of trying to explore what it might mean to lose oneself in that liquidity of universal address. That immersion, moreover, is an attempt to reinstate something that seemed to the early German romantics as if *missing*, or out of the

[7] 'Das Morgenland ist die Heimat alles Wunderbaren, in dem Allertume und der Kindheit der dortigen Meinungen findet man auch höchst seltsame Winke und Rätsel, die immer noch dem Verstande, der sich für klüger, aufgegeben werden. So wohnen dort in den Einöden oft seltsame Wesen, die wir wahnsinnig nennen, die aber dort als übernatürliche Wesen verehrt werden.' *Phantasien*, 158. Edward A. Lippman (ed.), *Musical Aesthetics: A Historical Reader – The Nineteenth Century* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 1988), 6. The translation is by David Schubert.

reach of language: that is to say, madness stands here for a structurally open-ended experimental space in which the end of language and the beginning of something else is imagined.

Wackenroder's oeuvre, we might say, is constituted around an endless search for a way of trying to get to an ideal or 'general' mode of discourse, a way of addressing the world that does not get bogged down in forms of petty particularism (he terms them variously 'hieroglyphs', 'scribbles', 'chatter', all forms of *Verkehr* or worthless exchange or communication). He is searching always for a missing ideal mode of address, and its naming as a kind of 'madness' brings to music in particular a quite specific meaning: music can ape the sense of general flow attributed to ideal discourse, a kind of omnidirectional distribution of meaning, and yet it can also represent a dreadful *particular*, an instance of a quite specific materiality (like his loathsome hieroglyphs or chatter). And it is only madness, that peculiarly 'prophetic' madness of the poet, that can sustain the impossibility of thinking the particular and the general together. In the end, the 'naked saint' of Wackenroder's short essay is delivered from his torment by music itself, raised up to another state of being by the lovers' song as they drift down the river. Music's meaning for Wackenroder, therefore, is paradoxical, but productively so. The question he asks of music is here twofold: what is it about music that is *particular*, materially *specific*, and how does that specificity relate to the romantic conception of discourse as general, complete, homogeneous?

The meaning of discourse here, then, is quite specific: it represents, in the early romantic economy of Wackenroder, Hölderlin and the German Idealists (especially the so-called Tübingen group), the channel of address, the 'Bahn' or path of the flow of statements, moving inexorably in the direction of Kittler's universal addressee, an idealized, abstracted imagination of the bourgeois male citizen, educated, careful, attentive to public discourse. He is always present as a kind of avatar, resolute, but gloriously empty. That which brings this careful idealization into contact with the everyday, the contingent, the specific, is thus that which could bring noise into the high-fidelity noise-to-signal ratio of the channel. For Wackenroder, indeed, music can disrupt universal address, can cause a certain discursive confusion, a disorientation, as much as it can furnish insight and ecstatic changes in consciousness. What is queer here, it seems to me, is the epistemologically doubled character of music as both noise and message. In these 'eloquent' moments of 'confusion', the senses seize up, become infected by or intermingled with each other, and the world *goes out of tune*.[8]

[8] I take this phrase from Daniel K. L. Chua, 'Vincenzo Galilei, modernity and the division of nature', Suzannah Clark and Alexander Rehding (eds), *Music Theory and Natural Order: From the Renaissance to the Early Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 17–29. Chua suggests that the alignment of music with nature is a symptom of modernity: 'This symptom does not occur tangentially, as if it were a side-effect of the attempt of modernity to cure itself of its failures, but centrally as the very dis-ease that divides the ancient from the modern world', 22. I am tempted to extend Chua's

* * *

For Hölderlin too, there is always something incomplete or wayward about music and, as in Wackenroder's paradoxical ecstatic praise of that art, there is also 'wisdom' ['Weisheit' or 'Wissen'], understood in that peculiarly early romantic manner as insight hard won through inner and outer turmoil. The mourning for the loss of sight in one of Hölderlin's later odes, the thirteen-verse 'Der blinde Sänger' (completed in 1802), for example, constitutes one of these bewildering states of conjoined ecstatic pathology and wisdom. And it is *listening* that rushes in to fill the place of the lost sense of sight (marked here as the privileged site of 'reason', opposed to 'wisdom'):

> Wo bist du, Jugendliches! das immer mich
> Zur Stunde wekt des Morgens, wo bist du, Licht!
> Das Herz ist wach, doch bannt und hält in
> Heiligem Zauber die Nacht mich immer.
>
> Where are you, young one! That always me
> At dawn would waken, where are you, light?
> The heart is awake, yet [night] holds and binds me
> Always in holy magic.
>
> […]
>
> [du,] Kamst allbeseeligend den gewohntem Pfad
> Herein in deiner Schöne, wo bist du, Licht!
> Das Herz ist wieder wach, doch bannt und
> Hemmt die unedliche Nacht mich immer.
>
> [you] Came, delighting, down the usual path
> In your beauty, where are you light?
> The heart's awake again, yet binds and
> Impedes me still the unending nature.
>
> […]
>
> Und um die Wälde sah ich die Fittige
> Des Himmels wandern, da ich ein Jüngling war;

reading here to think of men's relationship with music as marking the passage of a certain conception of the modern personality. Romanticism, one might thus say, marks a second (or third, if we take the Enlightenment to mark the second) intensification of that first alienation that Chua notes in Zarlino.

Nun siz [sitz‘] ich still allein, von einer
Stunde zur anderen und Gestalten

And around the woods I saw the wings
Of heaven wandering, when I was a youth;
Now I sit here alone in silence from one hour
To the next and [my thoughts fashion] shapes

Aus Lieb und Laid [Leid] der helleren Tage schafft
Zur eignen Freude nun mein Gedanke sich,
Und ferne lausch’ ich hin, ob nicht ein
Frendlicher Retter vieleicht mir komme.

Out of love and grief of brighter days [my thought forms itself]
For its own amusement,
And I strain to listen far lest a
Friendly deliverer come for me.

Dann hör ich oft die Stimme des Donnerers
Am Mittag, wenn der eherne nahe kommt,
Wenn ihm das Haus bebt und der Boden
Unter ihm dröhnt und der Berg es nachschallt.

Then I hear often the voice of the Thunderer,
At noon, when the brazen one draws near,
When his house shakes and the ground
Under him rumbles and the mountain echoes it.

Den Retter hör’ ich dann in der Nacht, ich hör’
Ihn tödtend, den Befreier, belebend ihn,
Den Donnerer vom Untergang zum
Orient eilen und ihm nach tönt ihr,

I hear the saviour in the night, I hear
Him, the liberator, killing and giving new life,
The thunderer from sunset to the
Orient hurrying and you echo him,

Ihm nach, ihr meine Saiten! es lebt mit ihm
Mein Lied und wie die Quelle dem Strome folgt.
Wohin er denkt, so muß ich fort und
Folge dem Sicheren auf der Irrbahn.

Him, you my strings! With him lives
My song as the stream follows the current.
Whither his thought, so must I away and
I follow the sure one along the straying path.

Wohin? Wohin? Ich höre dich da und dort
Du Herrlicher! Und rings um die Erde tönts.
Wo endest du? Und was, was ist es
Über den Wolken und o wie wird mir?

Whither? Whither? I hear you here and there
You glorious one! And round the earth it sounds
Where do you end? And, what is it
Over the cloud and o what befalls me?

[…]

O kommt, daß euer, euer die Freude sei,
Ihr alle, daß euch se[e]gne der Sehende!
O nimmt, daß ichs ertrage, mir das
Leben, das Göttliche mir vom Herzen.

O come, that yours, yours be the joy,
All you, that the seeing man blesses you
O take, that I may bear it, take from me
This life, take the divine from my heart.[9]

Images of 'flow' are quite common in German-language early romantic (and German Idealist) texts and they represent, I suggest, an attempt at capturing something of the peculiar 'generality' of discourse in this group of symbolic economies. In the verse 'Ihm nach … auf der Irrbahn', for example, the imagery of the 'current' affects a channelling of song along a certain vector, a wayward path ('Irrbahn', literally 'mad path'), which is overseen by the 'sure one' ('dem Sicheren'), he/it that holds the course straight, keeps it on track, as it were (in the German it is clear that this anonymous figure is not feminine).

This is by no means the only place in Hölderlin's odes and hymns where this kind of imagery can be found. In 1942, Martin Heidegger, ruminating on the

[9] From Michael Hamburger (ed.), *Hölderlin: Collected Poems* (London: Routledge, 1966), 184–186. I have kept the archaic spelling here. This is an edition with a parallel English translation, but these translations are not literal, so the one given here is my own, trying wherever possible to capture the syntactical ambiguities of the original, which Hamburger's largely smoothes over.

complexities of reading the river imagery in Hölderlin's hymn 'Der Ister' made the following remark:

> The Ister hymn closes, or more precisely, it comes to a halt, with the words, "Yet what that one knows, that river,/No one knows". Does this mean that the slightest effort to call attention to this river poem thus already infringes the poet's own word? No. The lines just cited tell us that the flow of the river that is named here is an activity that takes its own time, and that such activity is concealed. The activity signifies that this river has a distinction.[10]

The distinction that Heidegger speaks of here is that distinction marked, specifically, by song:

> At the beginning of that other river hymn that bears the full title "The Rhine", we hear it said: "Enigma is that which has purely sprung forth. Even/The song may scarcely unveil it." In this "scarcely" there nonetheless lies the knowledge that, if at all, *only* song can tell something of the "origin", of the "source", of the "springing forth" and of the "flow".[11]

This designation of flow as something that only song can tell, and the representation of song as a kind of channelling – of the steering of discourse by song in order to speak without origins, without source, to speak only of becoming – resonates strongly, as we shall see, with the problematics of F. W. J. Schelling's metaphysics of 'failure'.[12] For Heidegger, two images or topoi come into play, both of which we have seen before: the one, an image of channelling, flow, current; the other, the eternal unity of discourse. This second image, of a discourse with no 'origin' or beginning is thus both enabled and problematized by the first: the image of 'flow' or 'current' allows for a representation of discourse as always already in motion and yet, as also wayward, as occasioning discipline (a 'channelling'). For Hölderlin too, the thinking of this dichotomous always-already-having-started predicament of discourse is both enabled and problematized by flow or *becoming*, and images of water, immersion, of being swept away, function as a way of speaking without origins, without beginnings. What is particularly striking here is that it is *song* that

[10] Martin Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister'*, trans. by William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), 19. The original reads: 'Was aber jener thuet der Strom/Weis niemand', in Hamburger (ed.), *Hölderlin*, 496. I have kept the archaic spelling here.

[11] Heidegger, *Hymn*, 19.

[12] Indeed, there is a dichotomy that runs through the Schellingian dissident metaphysics – on the one hand the notion of the Absolute, or the complete, as posited both in time and in space, must by definition always already *have been*, always already *have begun* and, on the other hand, time always infers there to have been a beginning and space requires finitude, an end.

works to attend to the putative 'failure' of language: 'es lebt mit ihm/Mein Lied und wie die Quelle dem Strome folgt./Wohin er denkt, so muß ich fort und/Folge dem Sicheren auf der Irrbahn'. The song of the poet follows the *Strom*, immerses itself in the generality of that flow and thereby allows itself to speak with that flow's inevitability, its wayward but inevitable *authority*.

The activity of listening figures in this poem, as a facilitation of song, which works as a proxy for the channelling of discourse:

listening → song → discourse.

And yet, it also figures, as it were, 'negatively', as a *particularity* that must always be actively dissolved back into the generality of immersion in flow: 'I strain to listen far', 'I hear the voice of the thunderer', 'I hear the saviour in the night', – images of a 'disability' that find their ultimate resolution in the immersion in generality (death) or the recovery of sight (hence, listening as incomplete, but also as a site of both a transfixing and a transfiguration). In this fixated moment, the poet (blind, 'sick', incomplete in the terms of this epistemology) turns to *Strom* as a way of imagining a self-completion or self-sufficiency.

As we shall see, there were many German-language writers on music in the first few years of the nineteenth century that held listening, especially to music, to be something of an epistemological problem. We might try to explain this as follows: if, as the romantic hagiographic worlds of Wackenroder, Hölderlin and their contemporaries would seem to have it, discourse is 'general', singular, in search of a maximum number of addressees, then that unanimity or universality (what Benedict Anderson has termed 'unisonality')[13] would seem to require a coherent (unfractured, uniform) addressee, the multitude-as-one (what Friedrich Kittler, as we will see, terms the romantic imagination of the 'universal addressee'); what listening might all too easily allow in Wackenroder and Hölderlin, therefore, is a certain (contingent) particularity; it is too materially specific, tending towards introspection and melancholy and, in and of itself, it offers the possibility of threatening the composure of the universal addressee of that unitary discourse, *man* himself. There is, then, something queer about listening in that its function is strangely twofold: (i) as something that can mark an incompleteness, a particularity or even a pathology; (ii) as something that can serve as a degraded proxy for the redeeming possibilities of generalizing flow. It is from here, in this underdetermined paradox, that our queer story sets off on its next adventure.

Listening to Histories

In 1998, in a special issue of *The Musical Quarterly* on 'The history of listening', Rob Wegman characterized the 1990s as 'the decade in which musicology

[13] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, [1983] 1991), 145.

rediscovered music listening'.[14] Wegman captures something of the broader tendency in some corners of music scholarship of the last 25 years or so to consider not just the various ways in which works are produced, but also the ways in which those works have been used, taken up or, to put it in terms that Marx would have recognized, consumed. What I want to suggest here is that this 'turn to listening' is usefully understood in terms of what Foucault would call the 'conditions of possibility' for an as yet fully realized profound epistemological shift in music-historical scholarship.[15] Nonetheless, as Leon Botstein makes clear, the obstacles to this history of listening – beset by the complexities of the source materials and the complexities that attend any mapping of cultural practices in the early nineteenth-century Austro-German context – are almost overwhelming.[16]

The fact that listening can be conceived in a variety of ways is a banal observation but one which will nonetheless form a crucial starting point for what follows. Certainly, as a category of what in German is termed *Ideengeschichte*, listening in the German *Frühromantik* functioned as a site or proxy for what I have been calling the movement of discourse (in Wackenroder and Novalis in particular);[17] and yet, as an operator of a possible *Alltagsgeschichte* or 'history of the everyday', the historical problematics of listening help us to think about how listening audiences used music in the negotiation of their subjectivities and personalities; moreover, as an admittedly problematic site for the construction of what Anglo-American historiography has long termed 'intellectual history', listening as an historical category can challenge the schematic histories of 'epochs' by drawing attention to the microhistorical, the localized; finally, it can also be constituted within the rich French traditions of *histoire des mentalités*, *psychologie historique*, *histoire sociale des idées* and *histoire socio-culturelle* as a practice that points to the anonymous shared suprapersonal dimension of experience.

To do justice to these historiographical traditions would take more than the space of this one volume, but I think it is useful to nonetheless conceive of listening as something which each of these historiographical traditions can productively construe and scrutinize. Perhaps the starkest of the distinctions I might have sketched here is that between the French and German historiographical traditions. *Ideengeschichte* or the 'history of ideas' as figured in the German tradition

[14] Rob C. Wegman, '"Das musikalische Hören" in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: perspectives from pre-war Germany', *The Musical Quarterly* 82(3/4) (1998), 434–454, 434.

[15] In 1989, Obelkevich recognised the ground-shifting potential (he termed it a 'Copernican revolution') of the turn to the listener: James Obelkevich, 'In search of the listener', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 114 (1989), 108.

[16] Leon Botstein, 'Toward a history of listening', *The Musical Quarterly* 82(3/4; special double issue, 'Music as Heard') (1998), 428.

[17] See Peter Rummenhöller, '"Hören" als ideedngeschichtliche Kategorie der Romantik', in Wolfgang Gratzer (ed.), *Perspektiven einer Geschichte abendlandischen Musikhörens* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1995), 175–184.

continued to emphasize the productive forces of exemplary individuals in shaping intellectual movements well into the 1980s (and it was largely in response to this tradition that the so-called *Alltagsgeschichte* emerged).[18] The French tradition, conversely, dominated by the *Annalistes* on the one hand and the so-called *quantitatistes* on the other,[19] emphasized the collective anonymity of intellectual productivity and sought to integrate that productivity into a larger geo-political historiographical frame: as Jacques Le Goff put it, 'the history of mentalities operates at the level of the everyday automatisms of behaviour. Its object is that which escapes historical individuals because it reveals the impersonal content of their thought'.[20]

Material Listening, Ideal Listening

And so, the route towards our goal, the 'meaning' or symbolic weight of listening around 1800, is far from clear. Do we build a picture 'from below', tarrying in the tiny moans and sighs that point to what listening might have meant, have been, or do we take up the challenge as if turning the Cape of Good Hope for the first time, mapping, mapping, mapping. There is no middle ground here, of course. Any third way is obscured precisely because that which is queer is always in excess of what history as a discipline will allow us to make visible, audible. It is precisely the historicist inclination here that hides what we are looking for: Žižek, as we have seen, calls it the 'ahistorical kernel of the Real',[21] a key lump of matter at the heart of the discipline which must not be named or shown, but which structures it, holds it together; its potency comes precisely in the fact that it

[18] See the useful characterization of this tradition and 'new' practices within in it in Wolfgang Hardtwig's *Neue Ideengeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001). See also Hans-Jörg Sandkühler, *Geschichtlichkeit der Philosophie: Theorie, Methodol[o]gie und Methode der Historiographie der Philosophie* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1991) and Ralph Marks, *Philosophie im Spannungsfeld zwischen Historiographie und Historismus: Studien zu Kant, Johannes von Müller und Dilthey* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1988).

[19] For a useful account of this tradition, see Lynn Hunt, 'Introduction' to Hunt (ed.), *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989), 1–22, especially 4–7. See also Jacques Revel and Lynn Hunt, *Histories: French Constructions of the Past* (New York: The New Press, 1995), especially 319–475. On the *quantitatistes*, see Emmanuel le Roy Ladurie, *The Territory of the Historian*, trans. by T. B. and Siân Reynolds (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1979), 3–5 and François Furet, *The Workshop of History*, trans. Jonathan Mandelbaum (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1984), 40–53, available in Revel and Hunt, *Histories*, 329–348.

[20] Jacques Le Goff, 'Mentalities: A history', in Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Nora (eds), *Constructing the Past: Essays in Historical Method* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 167–68: quoted in Roger Chartier, *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 27.

[21] Ibid., 101.

remains hidden. Between the French and German traditions there is an agreement about one thing, that the past is *alien* and, what is more, that that alienness is what holds the present together. Yet what if we were to suspend this stubborn discontinuity for a moment, what if, that is, we were to recognize in historicism a desire first and foremost to mark out and discipline the *present* as autonomous? In this move, we are able to rethink what I termed in the Introduction to this volume the 'blasphemy' of thinking *unhistorically* (or not completely historically) about music. In what follows I want to try to read a handful of texts on listening in terms of what they allow us to say about the limits of historical thought.

Friedrich Kittler has shown how attention to the ways in which technologies of dissemination come into play with other historical dynamics can fundamentally transform our imagining of historically determined epistemological landscapes such as the late Napoleonic era in the German-speaking lands. Informed in particular by Marshall McLuhan's media theories from the 1960s[22] and by a rigorous grounding in literary *Germanistik*, Kittler's project represents a profound divergence from the radical *Germanistik* of the 1970s and 1980s, which tended to characterize creative production as a kind of falsehood that obscured or deliberately covered over hard political and social truths (what Marxists would call the relations of production, for example). In particular, the radical scholarship from which Kittler seeks to differentiate himself used ideology critique as its primary methodological operator and grounded its insights in a firm belief in the material roots of all ideology. For Kittler, the kinds of distinctions drawn in this scholarship between *cultural* and *material* production, the one 'false', the other 'real' or 'true', are themselves implicated in an ideological apparatus that has consistently (and problematically) insisted on the subordination of cultural production to material conditions. 'Romanticism', as David Wellerby puts it in his introduction to the English translation of Kittler's *Aufschreibesysteme 1800/1900*, is not a coherent ideology, or even a set of ideological practices as the ideology critics would have us believe, but,

> a certain technology of the letter. What limits this technology and therefore renders it historically describable is the documented existence of other technologies, most notably that of modernism, described in the second section of Kittler's book. The differences between the two discourse networks (1800/1900) provide the epistemological lever that enables each to be viewed from the outside.[23]

An orientation in Kittler to the technological impulse promises to allow for the locating of listening within a network of technologies that can be characterized and categorized by virtue of their distinctiveness from other networks of technologies

[22] See, in particular, Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

[23] David Wellerby, 'Introduction', in Kittler, *Networks*, xviii.

of listening, but also within a *continuum* of connected networks.[24] Indeed, this orientation can generate an interpretative frame that not only *sanctions* ideology critique but enriches such critiques by also paying critical attention to the ways in which claims to have 'uncovered ideology' are themselves subject to the operation of ideology, situated in the same 'discourse network' it seeks to characterize (this is, in effect, a strictly orthodox Althusserian observation, but articulated radically differently).

For Kittler, then, it is all about 'technology', meant in the broadest Heideggerian sense as that which comes from *τέχνη* ['technē'], a kind of 'knowing'.[25] For Heidegger, technology belongs with *poiesis*, and is about 'revealing' that which is ambiguous, lofty: 'once the revealing that brings forth truth into the splendour of radiant appearance was also called *technē*'.[26] In this sense, the kinds of 'technologies' that framed, facilitated and structured listening practices in 1800 might be understood as part of the fabric of knowing, of understanding, of 'revealing' the world unto those who sought its meaning. To translate this into more avowedly Kittlerian articulation, such technologies might be said to constitute the very basis on which the world could be construed, made and engaged. In this sense, Kittler makes of Heidegger's account of technology a radically culturalist proposition, but also a radically determinist one. To speak, then, of technologies of listening is, in this sense, to refuse the separation of technology as mere instrument from *technē* as in some sense akin to *poiesis*. Listening construed in this manner is thus both a way of being *in* the world and of *remaking* that world.

One of the key 'technologies' of listening in the German urban *Frühromantik* was constituted in the built environment; urban spaces could be read both as expressions of the social imagination and as instrumental to it. Taking up Kittler's invitation to a radically culturalist articulation, architecture and the planned urban spaces of the major cities of the German-speaking lands can be said to have joined public and private spaces into a uninterrupted continuum and worked as a crucial operator in what Daniel Leonhard Purdy has characterized as the bourgeois 'semiotic system'. In that system, clothes and domestic decoration were read as markers of 'individual character and moral worth'[27] and the commodity-quality of goods, their 'value' in that semiotic system, inevitably depended upon their *display*. It is the domestic–public continuum which comes to dominate this logic of display in the late Napoleonic era since it is here that bourgeois consumption becomes both explicit and highly discursivized. The domestic–public continuum

[24] A particularly rich demonstration of this approach is to be found in Kittler's *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), especially 'Gramophone', 21–114.

[25] Martin Heidegger, 'The question concerning technology', in *Basic Writings*, ed. by David Farrell Krell (London: Routledge, 1993), 338.

[26] Ibid., 339.

[27] Daniel Leonhard Purdy, 'Reading to consume: Fashionable receptions of literature in Germany, 1774–1816' (PhD Dissertation, Cornell University, 1992).

as a technological frame in Austria–Hungary's imperial capital also structured the bourgeois cultural imaginations of cultural space: bourgeois Vienna's putative *Gemütlichkeit* ['cosiness' or 'comfort'] (in striking contrast to the formality of the imperial core of the city) is a rich exemplification of the Austro-German urban imagination that did not seek until much later than its counterparts to the west to distinguish rigidly between public and private bourgeois spaces and, in the early nineteenth-century context in particular, constructed its urbanity in terms of a perceived *liveability*. The circumscribed but growing bourgeois spaces of the city were structured as a chain of habitable *gemütliche* spaces circling the old core, projecting the domestic space outwards into public spaces (despite, or perhaps because of, the unpleasant unsanitary realities of living in Vienna around 1800). Another feature of the Vienna before the so-called *Gründerzeit* was the strict spatial delineation of aristocratic and mercenary/bourgeois spaces: the aristocratic core of old Vienna was separated from the outer bourgeois spaces by a vast belt of defensive land (the great *glacis*) which Josef II had transformed into a public recreational area.[28]

In the first decade of the new century, grand public architecture in Vienna was still the domain of the feudal and absolutist imaginations, from St Stephen's Cathedral along Graben and the Kohlmarkt to the Hofburg. The so-called 'bürgerlich' spaces of Vienna, lying beyond what is now the Ringstraße (then the open space of the *glacis*), were less aggrandized than later spaces, and *Hausmusik*, *Gemütlichkeit* and coffee-house culture were key operators that sustained a permeability in the boundary between private and public spaces well into the middle of the nineteenth century. This pattern is, with some telling variants, repeated across the large urban spaces of the German Old Reich (and, after 1806, of the German confederation), which embrace at least three distinct functioning urban structures:

1. *boom towns*, those centres which, by the granting of monarchical favour and, equally as important, through subsequent bourgeois and mercantilist investment in the material and cultural infrastructure of those towns, expanded their populations and were the major players in what we have come to call the *vital revolution*;[29]
2. *Residenzstädte*, such as Munich, Stuttgart, Kassel and Mannheim, were towns which emerged as the result of the establishment of a court presence in that town in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries;

[28] By 1800, the great musical institutions and landmarks which we now associate with later Viennese cultural life were still nothing but imagined spaces: the new Rathaus, built 1872–1883, the new Hofburgtheater, 1873–1884 and the Reichsrat, 1874–1884, for example, were all products of the great Ringstraße developments of the later nineteenth century. August von Siccardsburg and Eduard van der Nüll's new Hofoper (1869–1876) was similarly a product of the second *Gründerzeit*.

[29] See Jan de Vries (ed.), *European Urbanization, 1500–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 35.

3. *Reichstädte*, ancient walled cities which had the status of *Reichsunmittelbarkeit* (a particular urban status which granted a city and its patrician authorities, under the complex arrangements of the Old Reich, unmediated access to the powers and protection of the emperor) including Nuremberg, Augsburg and Lübeck.

In each, the continued strict delineation of aristocratic and bourgeois spaces generated a particular spatial quality to bourgeois culture, manifest in the smallness of venues, the informality of bourgeois public cultural life, and the emphasis on appropriately framed rituals of display as a marker of a set of qualities we might render into English as *personality*. The fluidity of the public/private spaces (and their strict differentiation from aristocratic space) undoubtedly spills over into what David Gramit has called the 'social categories of musical discourse'.[30] As we shall see in Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder's (1773–1798) striking figuration of music as a kind of *territory* – where the spatial location of the listening subject is addressed in ways that appear to confound our 'modern' understanding of the private/public divide – this fluidity in the demarcation of public and private is a crucial determiner of public (and private) musical life in early nineteenth-century Austro-German culture and was a critical agent in representing and maintaining gender differences.

The particularities of this spatial framing of the display of consumption are crucial since, outside the appropriate (sanctioned) spaces, display becomes a marker of deceit, deviance and dissent, or (worse) a sign of a flawed wealth, an emptied-out *Verkehr* or *Handlung* (traffic or dealing) of goods and therefore also a marker of the precariousness of bourgeois claims to a cultural, spiritual and political economy of its own. Within this spatially structured context, public concert life, running alongside aristocratic invited concerts, is marked accordingly as an *extension* of the domestic logic of display – not because the differences in this logic between the public and domestic realms were somehow 'ignored', but because modes of listening, 'exemplary listening' as we might term it here, are not yet sufficiently sketched out in the general discourses on music as to codify a distinct public behaviour: an introspective, individuating mode of listening that later (certainly by the second half of the nineteenth century) came to characterize domestic listening as a refuge from the public hubbub, certainly finds an early but vague expression, 'silently in glances, tears and aurally with a sigh', as Botstein puts it.[31] Indeed, this 'silent' (or, better, 'fixated') listening, far from ubiquitous in the first decade of the nineteenth century, is taken up by a number of contemporaneous commentators as a *model* of a kind of displayed acculturation, an ideal to which listeners should aspire, but is not yet enshrined as normative: the fixated listener is on the way to becoming an exemplary individual and, as a model

[30] David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770–184*8 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 3.

[31] Botstein, 'Listening', 429.

of an 'ideal' mode of consumption, it finds telling parallels in the consumption of other cultural forms.

Yet the levels of production and consumption of cultural goods like books and musical scores both soared in this period despite war and rapid (sometimes traumatic) changes of governance. Just as readers transformed their attitudes to printed material,[32] changing their reading behaviour from one of intensive to extensive reading[33] (from an intense knowledge of small number of texts, to a less 'deep' knowledge of a much larger number of texts), so listening practices transformed and, whilst 'extensive' listening was eventually brought in line with 'fixated' listening, the new expansive modes of consumption around 1800 were, it would seem, initially in conflict with the notion of a fixated or attentive listening. Indeed, just as reading practices became subject to intense scrutiny, a matter of moral urgency for members of the bourgeois *Gelehrtenstand* or learned classes,[34] so listening practices were subject to that same disciplinary pressure.

[32] Roger Chartier's work is canonical in this area. See in particular Roger Chartier (ed.), *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), *La correspondance: Les usages de la lettre au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1991), 'Text, symbols and Frenchness', *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985), 682–695, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), and *The Order of Books: Reader, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

[33] Chartier's characterization of the 'extensive' reader: 'The "extensive" reader, that of the *Lesewut* … is an altogether different reader – one who consumes numerous and diverse printed texts, reading them with rapidity and avidity and exercising a critical activity over them that spares no domain from methodological doubt.' Chartier, *Forms*, 17.

[34] Erich Schön, *Der Verlust der Sinnlichkeit oder die Verwandlkung des Lesers: Mentalitätswandel um 1800* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1987). For a useful overview of this process, see Purdy, 'Reading' which challenges the traditional sociological view that fashionable reading was motivated by a desire to emulate higher class status. Instead, Purdy suggests that the *Lesewut* was fuelled initially by the eighteenth-century court semiotic in which 'luxury goods signified social status', to be very quickly superseded by a bourgeois semiotic system that 'read clothes and domestic decorations as signs of individual character and moral worth' (p. 205). Another useful account of this process can be found in Daren Ivan Hodson, 'The institutionalisation of literature in eighteenth-century France and Germany: the functions of reading in Rousseau, Novalis, Fichte and the *Ecole Normale*' (PhD Dissertation, University of Utah, 1995). See also Robert Darnton, 'Readers respond to Rousseau: the fabrication of Romantic sensitivity', in *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 215–256. Other sources include: William Walter Rasch, 'Reading to complexity: Schlegel, Fichte, Humboldt and the question of reading' (PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1989); Simon Richter, 'Wieland and the homoerotics of reading', in Alice A. Kuzniar (ed.), *Outing Goethe and His Age* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 47–60; Birgit

So how are we to square the early canonization of fixated listening in a number of key literary texts against this extensive consuming of cultural products? We might begin to answer this question by posing the following hypothesis: it has long been (and continues to be) a characteristic of bourgeois culture that high cultural production and consumption are seen as better to withdraw from the exigencies of *Verkehr/Handlung*, or commercial 'traffic', and thereby, in that very withdrawal, create a demand for themselves by figuring themselves as lofty, with merit of their own, carrying a validity that is (literally) 'self-evident'. As we saw in the Introduction, there is something profoundly consistent in bourgeois attempts to territorialize their culture as self-sustaining, the site of an ideal withdrawal. The religiosity of attitudes to high cultural consumption in Wackenroder et al. is symptomatic, then, of a mode of production, like our own bourgeois cultural consumption, designed to differentiate its consumption from other kinds of wealth display (aristocratic, venal, vulgar). Indeed, for Norbert Elias the 'history of manners' in the Austro-German context is also the history precisely of a class territorialization:

> What legitimises the eighteenth-century [German] intelligentsia to itself, what supplies the foundation of its self-image and pride, is situated beyond economics and politics. It exists in what is called for precisely this reason *das rein Geistige*, in books, scholarship, religion, art, philosophy, in the inner enrichment, the intellectual formation (*Bildung*) of the individual, primarily through the medium of books, in the personality. … Thus the development of the concept *Kultur* and the ideals it embodies reflected the position of the German intelligentsia without a significant social hinterland, which, being the first bourgeois formation in Germany, developed an expressly bourgeois self-image, specifically middle-class ideas, and an arsenal of trenchant concepts directed against the courtly upper class.[35]

As one of the markers of bourgeois territorialization, the explicit development of the intellectual personality and its public display is a common element in many early romantic symbolic economies. The embroilment of this personality's development in venal or inappropriate consumption, to return to Purdy's characterization, brings that personality into question and, clearly, places the public display of too much pleasure in consuming in a problematic light. In this sense, the display of consumption worked within strict limits to *generalize* and discipline forms of consumption in order that, as Elias puts it, the bourgeoisie can 'legitimate itself to itself'. It is precisely this generalization, this disciplining (silencing, even) of consumption, which plays a crucial role in the claims that the early romantics

Baldwin, '*Wilhelm Meisters Wunderjahre* as an allegory of reading', *Goethe Yearbook*, v (1990), 213–232.

[35] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process, Vol. I. The History of Manners* (Oxford: Blackwell, [1939] 1969), 27.

made for their culture as 'universal', a claim which fixated listening seems in some sense to have grounded and yet also fundamentally to have problematized. A close queer reading of this predicament will therefore prove useful as a way of exploring the phantasmic underpinnings of this culture.

Whilst listening does specific kinds of cultural work in the early nineteenth-century Austro-German context, it does so in a clandestine and underhand manner and, as such, it cannot be construed simply as a materially limited *practice*: listening also brings with it its own negative *Symbolik*. In particular, where listening is used as a resource in the construction and projection of bourgeois male subjectivities, it often evokes a process in which contested subjectivities are juxtaposed (passion/piety, sensitivity/strength, creativity/solidity) and the outcome is invariably ambivalent. These dualisms abound in the works of Hoffmann, Tieck, Hölderlin, Novalis and many others.[36] As we shall see, close attention to the ways in which listening was construed as a site for subject formation (and subject performance) casts the ubiquity of these dualisms in a critical light. An account of the cultural uses made of listening can thus also feed back into the critical destabilization of the romantic subject that has characterized recent scholarship on Romanticism and which underlines Wegman's and Obelkevich's apposite characterizations of the musicological turn to listening as potentially radicalizing.

To examine the proliferation of male subjectivities around 1800, and their implication in discourses on listening to music, I want to turn now again to Wackenroder and to the work of two other striking contributors to a delicately inferred discourse on listening in the early nineteenth-century Austro-German context: Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, poet, critic and tragic 'martyr' to the early romantic moment; Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, philosopher and latter-day 'theologian', *bête noir* of the Hegelians; and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. I do not offer these authors as neat exemplars of a general *Weltanschauung* or even of a *mentalité*, since such claims are always open to the charge of arbitrary omission and crass extrapolation. I choose these authors, rather, in order to test out the prospects for a queer account of listening as a culturally projected 'idea' in the *Frühromantik* against a range of more or less canonical texts: Wackenroder, as the young member of the great 'trio' of German romantic thinkers on musical autonomy (with Ludwig Tieck and E. T. A. Hoffmann); Hegel as a much-vaunted

[36] The plural form, 'subjectivities', is important here since to speak of a singular romantic self, or a 'deep', concealed, subject-type to which all aspire and by which all measure themselves in the contemporaneous literature is to miss much of the texture of this period's particularities. Indeed, as Andrea K. Henderson has suggested in her work on English Romantic literature, the ubiquity in the early nineteenth century of a 'depth-psychology' model of subjectivity is often overstated, and that overstatement is an expression of an overwhelming historiographical desire to fix the so-called romantic subject into its most consumable 'heroic' unitary masculine self. See Andrea K. Henderson, *Romantic Identities: Varieties of Subjectivity, 1774–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

architect of the discourse of musical 'content' and so-called 'immanent critique'; and Schelling as a disturbing but productive presence, imagined by Slavoj Žižek as the materialist who murdered Idealism from within.[37] In choosing these figures, then, I want to ask a group of related questions about listening as both a *culturally projected idea* and a stubbornly ahistorical material practice. How might the *Frühromantiker* have made recourse to the image of listening and the listener? What kinds of cultural work did these commentators think listening could undertake? How might they have construed the practice of listening *vis-à-vis* other forms of consumption? Any attempt to answer such questions, it seems to me, should be premised on two fundamental epistemic orientations, each of which is an elaboration of the blasphemy I outlined in the Introduction to this book:

1. The questioning of listening must proceed from a historiographically pluralist methodology and should not commit absolutely to historicism.
2. The close 'reading' (or otherwise scrutinizing) of primary and secondary materials must form an important part of the methodological practice, but they need not predetermine the route that reading will take (in other words the distinction between primary and secondary source can be usefully – strategically – blurred).

Wackenroder and the Debilitating Audibility of Discourse

In *Phantasien über die Kunst für Freunde der Kunst* (1799), Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder opens the essay 'die Wunder der Tonkunst' [The wonders of music] with an ecstatic, although oblique, figuration of listening as facilitating a sudden and omnidirectional expulsion of 'images' ['Bilder']:

> Whenever I so inwardly enjoy how a beautiful strain of sounds suddenly, in free spontaneity, extricates itself from the empty stillness and rises up like sacrificial incense, floats gently on the breezes, and then silently sinks down to earth again; – then so many new, beautiful images spout forth and flock together in my heart that I cannot control myself out of rapture.[38]

[37] Slavoj Žižek, *The Indivisible Remainder: An Essay on Schelling and Related Matters* (London: Verso, 1996).

[38] 'Wenn ich es so recht innig genieße, wie der leeren Stille sich auf einmal, aus freier Willkür, ein schöner Zug von Tönen entwindet, und als ein Opferrauch emporsteigt, sich in Luften wiegt, und wieder still zur Erde herabsinkt; – da entsprießen und drängen sich so viele neue, schöne Bilder in meinem Herzen, daß ich vor Wonne mich nicht zu lassen weiß'. *Phantasien über die Kunst für Freunde der Kunst*, in *Wackenroder* (Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, 1925 [1799]), 164. Trans. by David Schubert, available in Edward A. Lippman (ed.), *Musical Aesthetics: A Historical Reader – The Nineteenth Century* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 1988), 10.

In this opening fragment we are confronted with a way of thinking about the encounter with music that seems to undermine the agency of the listening subject in that encounter: where, we might ask, can human agency be located in music's free spontaneity, its self-extrication from stillness and its self-governing coming-to-be and passing-away? Indeed, by contemporary scholarly standards, this essentializing characterization of music seems hopelessly naïve, leaving little or no room for the active participation of the listener in the construction of music's meanings. Yet, within the logic of the early romantic discourse network, this opening gesture makes perfect sense, since it is founded on a fantasy of masculine composure (on a fantasy that man is whole, complete and that his personality can be held together) that sustains a range of hegemonic gender ideologies right into our own present.

In Wackenroder's view of music, attention to the act of listening is subdued in favour of a meditation on the raw *effects* of the music at the most 'general' (or universal) level, drawing on a commonplace, although by 1799 by no means ubiquitous, late eighteenth-century German fascination for *Affekt*, for the ways in which music can enact changes upon the 'universal' (male, bourgeois) body and upon the 'universal' (male, bourgeois) mind.[39] The German verbs *geniessen* ['enjoy'] and *sich lassen wissen* [lit. 'know (how) to let oneself' perhaps better translated as something like 'to be able to control oneself'], for example, take the experiential *particularity* of the encounter with music and abstract it outwards and upwards: 'we' (men) do not, Wackenroder suggests, encounter 'our' (men's) subjectivity in listening, but we wrongly, dangerously, allow the music to take over, to furnish a pleasure that undermines our composure (masculinity is threatened by that act of listening). Yet, the emphasis on music's self-sufficiency also articulates listening, in contrast to this debilitating function, as a general and normalizing 'enjoyment' (abstractable from Wackenroder's verb 'genieße' to the substantive 'Genuß') of music, figuring the 'delight' of listening as a kind of distracted or charmed observation: we could easily imagine replacing the verb 'enjoy' with 'watch' here. Both senses of listening – as a pleasuring and as a disengaged 'observation' – are operating here simultaneously and neither has the upper hand. The one, resolutely charged with masculine imagery (detachment, composure), relies on the other (charm, fixation), as its supplement, its feminine subaltern. This is especially borne out in the initial construction, 'Wenn ich es so recht innig genieße, wie', which figures the *Genuß* of listening as triggered by the focused observation of music behaving as if it were some kind of animal-like

[39] The literature on this is extensive. See my 'Autonomy, Ontology and the Ideal: Music Theory and Philosophical Aesthetics in Early Nineteenth-Century German Thought' (PhD thesis, University of Newcastle, UK, 1995), 74–99. It is also worth mentioning again here David Clarke's 'Musical autonomy revisited', in Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton (eds), *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 159–170, in which the conception of musical autonomy is reclaimed as a radicalizing turn in musicology.

entity, waking from the charmed sleep of silence, but which nonetheless causes the listener to lose control 'out of rapture' ['vor Wonne']: it is this loss of control in the face of listening that opens up some ways to understand the gender politics at work here.

This abstraction and bifurcation of listening into 'rational' and 'distracted' modalities is compounded by Wackenroder in his employment of three images, which structure the encounter with music around the grammatical subject *Musik*: music as having agency; music as a kind of void; and music as a special (autonomous) place.

1. Musical agency

Music, in the first of Wackenroder's three images, is not the object of scrutiny, but is here the primary agent itself:

> Sometimes music appears to me ["Bald kommt Musik mir vor"] like a phoenix, which lightly and boldly *raises itself* for its own pleasure, *floats* upwards triumphantly *for its own gratification*, and pleases gods and men by the flapping of *its* wings.[40]

Music's self-animation (emphasized by its function as the grammatical subject of the sentence) bars the subject-forming consequences of listening in favour of a purely *musical* agency as a kind of 'sounding out' of the musical life-object; listening becomes at best a kind of detached, meditative, passive observation of music doing its own thing, which can thereby also overwhelm or control us – again the duality of detachment and distraction operates here. Clearly we need to think through the specificity of Wackenroder's imagery here by questioning the internal logic of this textual moment and the particulars of how it operates that imagery. I think a good place to start is to envisage this ontologizing image of music (as self-animated) as the operation of a particular technology of the letter, to draw again on Wellbery's formulation.[41] Wackenroder's modelling of music as a material capable of self-animation is grounded in a specific network of technologies that work towards the dissemination of a universalizing discourse: it is these claims of music to operate as universal discourse that are at stake here and which charge the romantic sensibility of Wackenroder's writing here with such disquiet. How to listen without dissolving, how to engage music without being taken up by it – these are the questions that are raised again and again here, all ultimately asking what it means to be a man who listens.

[40] 'Bald kommt Musik mir vor wie ein Vogel Phönix, der sich leicht und kühn zu eigner Freude erhebt, zu eignem Behagen stolzierend hinaufschwebt, und Götter und Menschen durch seinen Flügelschwung erfreut.' *Phantasien*, 164; *Aesthetics*, 10.

[41] Wellerby, 'Introduction', Friedrich A. Kittler, *Networks*, xviii.

In order to explain what I mean by this notion that music is embedded for Wackenroder in a specific network of technologies, I want to turn again briefly to Kittler's characterization of romantic poetry. It is worth quoting at length here:

> The output of Poets in the discourse network of 1800 constituted a DISTRIBUTION OF DISCOURSES. It provided discourse with a maximum number of addressees. Schlegel's *Fragment on a Characteristic of the German Classic* noted in praise of the classical writer Georg Forster that "convivial communication" was "one of the ideas he was most fond of, one that presented itself to his spirit frequently and in the most varied forms". In this the writer was not far from the merchant. Just as the latter "principally provides for the exchange of material goods", the writer makes possible the "interchange of intellectual goods and creations". Thus an end was set to the limited economy of circulating texts in the Republic of Scholars … Writing was granted literally universalizing and literally textualizing functions: it wove a discourse that encompassed or generated mankind as a whole.[42]

This characterization insists on the romantic imagination of poetry (or, for our purposes, those literary forms that draw on the poetic idiom) as, first and foremost, a *technology* designed to undertake the cultural work of distributing discourse (and, in Wackenroder's case, of negotiating the impasse of debilitating pleasure and fixated abstracted listening): poetry stands, in the romantic discourse network, as the highpoint of discourse, the seminal product of writing, providing discourse with 'a maximum number of addressees'. In this sense, as we have already seen in our reading of Hölderlin, the technologies of *listening* are at odds with the productive dynamics of writing: listening threatens the universality of written discourse by virtue of its status as a very *particularized* mode of taking up that generality; it stands here for the impudently *particular* to writing's serene *general*. It can be implicated in the technology of poetry only in so far as poetry obliquely addresses the listener: *listen* to what I have to say, I am all that you need know of yourself. Hence, there is something of a contradiction at work in this culture, one which Wackenroder articulates with extraordinary clarity: on the one hand, listening can function as a display of a certain (appropriate, sanctioned) way of consuming which emphasizes bourgeois *Bildung* and which, when properly enacted as 'detached', can constitute an opportunity to perform one's masculine distance from venal *Verkehr*; on the other hand, listening fractures the putative singularity or universality of discourse (addressed to the maximum number of addressees) by potentially overwhelming the subject and underlining the unbearable material distinction between music and poetry, thereby undermining the claims of universal discourse.

[42] Kittler, *Networks*, 70. Schlegel extracts: *Georg Forster: Fragment einer Charakteristik der Deutschen Klassiker*, in Ernst Behler (ed.), *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe* (Munich, 1958), volume 1, 99.

Listening therefore has to function here as a secondary system, subjected to the primary operation of poetry (which stands for discourse in the most general sense here): listening operates, one might say, as its queer supplement.[43] It is precisely this structure that makes room here for the operation of hegemonic gender politics: just as listening has to function as the supplement to universal address, so modes of consumption that are not properly sanctioned within this economy are marked out as feminine, the supplement to the hegemonic order of universal discourse. Musical self-animation operates in Wackenroder precisely as an attempt to model listening (however sketchily) as something subordinated to the self-distribution of discourse, as something largely empty: when I listen, I am simply experiencing the flow of discourse; I am not an exemplary addressee except in so far as I am experiencing the flow of discourse *as flow*, not as any kind of specific or reducible material content. Music's apparent 'autonomy' (articulated as a kind of emptiness) is the means by which that experience of flow is generated and sonic materials are made to stand in here for discursive generality, for the universal distribution of discourse. The supplement is taken back into the centre as a symptom of it, just as the feminized consuming of art is reintegrated back into the bourgeois discourse of *Bildung* or male personality development through the sanctioned encounter with the arts, male taste, refinement and sensibility, having first been handed to men by their mothers.

2. Music as empty

The potential of this reading is also supported by the second of Wackenroder's three ontologizing images of music, that image which draws music into the ambit of a common late eighteenth-, early nineteenth-century sentimental religious trope by insisting on the proximity of innocence and death:

> At other times it seems to me as if music were [Bald dünkt es mich, Musik sei …] like a child lying dead in the grave; – one reddish sunbeam from heaven gently draws its soul away and, transplanted into the heavenly aether, it enjoys golden drops of eternity and embraces the original images of the most beautiful human dreams.[44]

[43] As we shall see, this point is also made by Hegel in his hierarchization of the 'romantic arts' in which music is subordinate to poetry, the 'most romantic' of the arts.

[44] 'Bald dünkt es mich, Musik sei wie ein Kind, das tot im Grabe lag – ein rötlicher Sonnenstrahl vom Himmel entnimmt ihm die Seele sanft, und es genießt, in himmlischen Äther versetzt, goldne Tropfen der Ewigkeit, und umarmt die Urbilder der allerschönsten menschlichen Träume'. *Phantasien*, 164; *Aesthetics*, 10. The translation of *Urbilder* as 'original pictures' is inept: a better alternative is 'archetypes' since this ties in with Schelling's reading of this passage in *Philosophie*.

The 'activity' of music in the first image (music's self-animation) is ambiguated by reference to death as a kind of 'crossing over' such that music is presented as a stuff that somehow *performs* – or *rehearses* the outward dynamics of – a cognitive shift of register (from 'flesh' to 'spirit', a kind of loosely poetic prefiguration of the qualitative shifts that Hegel was soon to capture in his notion of *Aufhebung* or 'sublation', as it is often translated into English). In this figuration, the agency of music is much more distended than in the first: whereas the first figuration of music as self-animating presents music as self-possessed, the second presents music as a *proxy* to some other process, a proxy which lingers as a lumpen material trace after the soul has transformed itself or reached its journey's end. Music here is not the process, or the representation of that process, but is precisely *that sentimentalized corpse*. Music stands here for the emptied structurality of discourse, its sonic shell, the echo, the material 'indivisible remainder' after the movement of discourse, the supplement which cannot be reabsorbed. This figuration of music as a 'dead child' also underlines Wackenroder's view of the sentimental generality of musical semiosis and its overwrought *Affekt* as part of a broader economy of expression grounded not just in a thorough-going revolt against the philosophical calm of the Cartesian aesthetic, but – simultaneously – in a rationalizing (or generalizing) impulse that seeks to discipline music's debilitating effects on the listening subject. It is crucial to recognize that these two positions are held in place *at the same time* and it is the technology of poetry that allows for this apparent logical contradiction. Here, however, they are much more antagonistic than in the first image. If the new technologies of discourse distribution that Wellerby and Kittler recognize in romantic poetry subordinate everything to their generalizing impulse, then within this network to listen needs to be figured as if it were nothing more than to experience that generality of discourse. Indeed, to articulate listening as something distinct to the general consumption of discourse, allowing for the possibility of construing it as governed by its own logics, as grounded in its own materiality, would be to split the romantic technology of discourse asunder, undermine its claims to universality and open it to the destructive operation of differentiated medialities (the particularizing operations of media logics – music, literature, painting etc. – as against the idealizing universal distribution of discourse).

3. Music as territory

Yet this subordination of listening to discursive universality is clearly not always efficiently realized. Indeed, there are places in Wackenroder's text where the medial *particularity* of music generates an intense entanglement of tropes, 'knots' in the texture of the text that are extraordinarily difficult to untangle, but which underline the contested nature of listening in this culture. One such knot, charged with the debilitating ecstasies of music consumption, is to be found in the third of Wackenroder's three ontologizing images that we have been considering: this final image is heralded by an ecstatic outburst, where the textual 'I' breaks through to draw the reader's attention onto the material specifics of poetic process itself:

> And sometimes, – what a magnificent fullness of images! – sometimes music *is* ["Und bald – welche herrliche Fülle der Bilder! – bald ist die Musik"] for me entirely a picture of our life: – a touchingly brief joy, which arises out of the void and vanishes into the void, – which commences and passes away, why one does not know: a little merry green island, with sunshine, with singing and rejoicing, – which floats upon the dark, unfathomable ocean.[45]

The interjection 'what a magnificent fullness of images!' spills out of the poetic logic of the text and breaks the charmed unity of the poetic technology – the interjection draws attention to the constructedness of the poetic manner. Resonating so clearly with the first image, the 'brief joy' ['kurze Freude'] of music that Wackonroder evokes works as a kind of technical marker that disciplines the outburst, bringing us back to the poetic register, dissipating the mischief of irony. This image is compounded by another textual figure which, perhaps more than the others, fundamentally problematizes the subject location of the listener: the 'merry green island' that floats on the 'dark unfathomable ocean' is a perplexing elaboration of the 'brief joy' image. We hover above the island, perhaps, but where, exactly, are we? The 'picture of life' that Wackenroder paints here is one so resolutely closed, self-sufficient and *discursively replete* as to render it profoundly strange.

This fleeting bliss of the utopian island points to a tendency in this discourse network to view music as volatile: it can only provide fleeting glimpses into the perfect world of infinite abstraction, infinite universality, discursive generality. The broad sweep of Wackenroder's figurations of music from autonomous self-animation through a proxy for the crossing over of the soul, to visions of utopia in the merry green island, constitutes an attempt to capture the complexities of music's relationship with poetry and to try to work it though, to *attend to it*, to find a way of rehearsing the disquiet that it generates so as to master it. The green island, in this context, models music as a kind of discursive territory, its content unspecified, and this territorial imagery is compounded in the next paragraph:

> instead of all answers and revelations, airy, beautiful cloud formations are shown to us, the sight of which calms us, we do not know how; – we greet and embrace as friends strange spiritual beings whom we do not know ["– wir begrüßen und umarmen fremde Geisterwesen, die wir nicht kennen, als Freunde"], and all the incomprehensibilities which besiege our souls and which are the disease

[45] 'Und bald – welche herrliche Fülle der Bilder! – bald ist die Tonkunst mir ganz ein Bild unsers Lebens: eine rührend kurze Freude, die aus dem Nichts entsteht und ins Nichts vergeht – die anhebt und versinkt, man weiß nicht warum: – eine kleine, fröhliche, grüne Insel, mit Sonnenschein mit Sang und Klang – die auf dem dunkeln unergründlichen Ozean schwimmt'. *Phanstasien*, 164; *Aesthetics*, 10.

> of the human race disappear before our senses, and our minds become healthy through the contemplation of marvels which are *far more incomprehensible* and exalted.[46]

What Wackenroder is trying to achieve here, it seems to me, is a solution to the paradox of listening: on the one hand, he is subject to the debilitating emotional *Affekt* of listening to music and, on the other, he is cognizant of the universalizing demands of the romantic technologies of poetry and discourse dissemination. So, how to account for the specifics of music's effects without undermining the universality of discourse as exemplified in poetry? For Wackenroder, this problem is addressed by acknowledging that music does not so much fail to articulate what Hegel later termed the 'abstract spirituality'[47] of poetry as to make itself available *to stand in for* general discursive flow: music's temporality (what Hegel describes as its *Negativität*[48]) can be accounted for in this logic as a kind of sonic modelling of conscious thought, a grand metaphor for the flow of discourse. In this sense, there is no room for a listening differentiated from other modes of sense-specific consumption (like reading, looking, tasting) since attempts to articulate any such differentiation would inevitably stumble onto the problem of differentiated media. Indeed, it is remarkable that nowhere in this short essay from the Phantasien does Wackenroder make use of the German verbs 'hören' or 'zuhören' [hear/listen] or even 'horchen' ['listen in']. Music is posited, instead, not as something that we actively consume, but as something that works as a highly malleable and adaptable proxy for a very 'general content' or discursive commonplace, a place where the reverie of unmediated 'convivial communication' can be realized, away from all the mundane pragmatics of script:

> O, then I close my eyes to all the strife in the world – and withdraw quietly into the land of music, as into the *land of belief*, where all our doubts and our sufferings are lost in a resounding sea, – where we forget all the croaking of human beings, where no chattering of words and languages, no confusion of

[46] 'aber statt aller Antwort und Offenbarung werden uns lustige, schöne Wolkengestalten gezeigt, deren Anblick uns beruhigt, wir wissen nicht wie; … – wir begrüßen und umarmen fremde Geisterwesen, die wir nicht kennen, als Freunde, und alle die Unbegreiflichkeiten, die unser Gemüt bestürmen, und die die Krankheit des Menschengeschlechtes sind, verschwinden von unsern Sinnen, und unser Geist wird gesund durch das Anschauen von Wundern, die noch weit unbegreiflicher und erhabener sind'. *Phantasien*, 165–166; *Aesthetics*, 11.

[47] G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* (Ditzingen: Reclam, 1971), 147–148.

[48] G. W. F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften III: Wissenschaft der Logik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), 272; *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften II: Die Naturphilosophie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), 47–48.

> letters and monstrous hieroglyphics makes us dizzy but, instead, all the anxiety of our hearts is suddenly healed by the gentle touch.[49]

This explicit contrasting of musical logic with the mundane pragmatics of script, a scriptural technology that does not measure up to the lofty standards of poetic discourse distribution, cedes to music a lofty function – to open out discourse into a generalized flow so that it cannot be subjected to the brutalizing effects of particularity. This is achieved through a specific kind of poetic logic which lays music alongside poetry as a kind of quasi-poetic material, holding it, as we have seen time and again in this reading, in the place of its supplement.

This logic of proxy, usefully construed perhaps in terms of the metonym (a figure which makes contingent but powerful connections between things according to the rules of contiguity and proximity), is not confined to Wackenroder's ruminations on music. As David Krell has shown, Novalis (Friedrich Leopold von Hardenberg, 1772–1801) made this logic quite explicit when he defined philosophy, that other great technology of discourse distribution, as proceeding from a first sensual kiss and as best accompanied by music:

> I wish my readers were able to read my remark that the beginning of philosophy is a first kiss at the very moment when they happened to be listening to Mozart's composition, "When love shines in your bright blue eyes", being sung most passionately – if indeed they were unable to be in tremulous proximity to a first kiss.[50]

The desire that the reader also *listen* underlines the notion that music can be taken up and used to useful discursive ends, subject to the laws of poetic discourse. Yet, there is also what seems like a sense-confusion here: whilst reading, the reader should listen, and whilst listening, touch (through the first kiss). I think we can best try to understand this putative 'confusion' in both Wackenroder and Novalis as part of a broader tendency in the romantic discourse network to generalize sensuality: individual reveries of origins, of lost selves and of anxious overwhelming emotional states are to be abstracted out into a universal model of the masculine economy of the self. In both Wackenroder and Novalis (and

[49] 'Oh, so schließ' ich mein Auge zu vor all dem Kriege der Welt – und ziehe mich still in das Land der Musik, als in das Land das Glaubens, zurück, wo alle unsre Zweifel und unsre Leiden sich in ein tönendes Meer verlieren – wo wir alles Gekrächze der Menschen vergessen, wo kein Wort- und Sprachengeschnatter, kein Gewirr von Buchstaben und monströser Hieroglyphenschrift uns schwindlig macht, sondern alle Angst unsers Herzens durch leise Berührung auf einmal geheilt wird'. *Phantasien*, 165; *Aesthetics*, 11.

[50] Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg), *Werke, Tagebücher und Briefe*, ed. by Hans-Joachim Mähl and Richard Samuel, 3 volumes (Munich: Karl Hanser Verlag, 1987), volume 2, *Das philosophische theoretische Werk*, 331. Quoted in Krell, *Contagion*, 36.

also, as we shall see, in Schelling and Hegel) we recognize a deep anxiety about experiential narratives that are over-individuated.

Indeed, one of the reasons why listening is so frequently figured in terms of other sensual logics (looking, touching, etc.) is that its individuating effects can become something pathological in the romantic discourse network. This point would not have been lost on Novalis who, in his theoretical–scientific notebooks of 1798–1800,[51] as Krell points out,[52] makes a strange appeal to music as a kind of medical practice:

> Every illness is a musical problem – its healing a *musical solution*. The more succinct and yet complete the solution, the greater the musical talent of the physician.
>
> Illnesses admit of manifold solutions. The choice of the most appropriate solution is what defines the talent of the physician.[53]

What is striking in this imagery is the proximity of music to sickness: although music presents itself here as a kind of healing, Novalis is nonetheless circumspect about the prospects for a truly productive outcome of medical intervention. As Krell makes clear, there is an explicit connection made in the notebooks between 'the pharmaceutical art, the art of mixing and administering medicines' and the what Novalis terms the 'art of killing'[54] – that connection elaborates a logic that grounds music within a broader pathological economy, the very economy of Wackenroder's *Seelenlehre*: 'The soul works as salves, balms, and unguents do, "and also like narcotic poisons – depressing and also exciting".'[55] Matters of musical *Affekt*, then, are irredeemably infected with the 'poison' of the soul, and feed back into a sickness in the body as a disturbance, a spasm, an infection: the romantic habitus (the romantic imagination of how culture is enacted onto the body) works to circumscribe experience, disciplining it so that it cannot run away from the discursive duties of universal manliness, universal discursiveness.

Schelling's Beginnings

This subsuming of different modalities of consumption into a generalizing prescription as to how discourse is to be consumed finds expression in the work

51 Novalis, *Werke*, volume 2.

52 Krell, *Contagion*, 62.

53 Novalis, *Werke*, volume 2, 545. Quoted in Krell, *Contagion*, 62.

54 Ibid., 61. Novalis, *Werke*, 2, 501.

55 Krell, *Contagion*, 61; the Novalis quotation: Novalis, *Werke*, 2, 711.

of a number of writers around 1800.[56] We have already seen how Wackenroder, Novalis and Hölderlin addressed this generality by juxtaposing sonic materials with other medialities. We can characterize their striving for the generality or 'convivial communication' of discourse as an attempt to solve a very particular problem in the early technologies of romanticism – how to encourage appropriate forms of consumption, especially the personality-forming consumption of bourgeois culture (*Bildung*), without the display of that consumption falling prey to the contagious feminine vulgarities of *Verkehr* and how, conversely, as Kittler puts it, to 'save an author from having written nothing at all', to ensure that 'masculine' productivity continues to find channels through which to flow:

> among men, and therefore among authors, it is no secret that only empty pages can be brought back from the kingdom of dreams. Whoever produces in the act of consumption has no real acquaintance with books. … In order to have tangible existence in real books, Poetry in 1800 needed recourse to non-masculine bodies. These bodies were "not I's" to the cursive "I" of authorship and transcendental philosophy. They were women, as women exist in plurality.[57]

As I have suggested, this process is about holding women in the grips of supplementarity. Wackenroder's agitation at the experience of music and his motivation for taking recourse to writing are usefully understood as grounded in this gendered articulation of consumption: as Friedrich Schwarz put it in 1792, woman did not possess the 'creative power of genius' since 'good taste comes to the serious masculine character from the fair sex, and so it comes to society, and the world benefits'.[58] Women are the source of good taste, but men are its users, its exemplars. Women are channels, men their channellers. The clarity of this emphasis on productivity as masculine and consumption as feminine is startling and can be understood as part of a broader programme of 'gender hardening' as Ludmilla Jordanova has termed it.[59] If, according to this view, the 'delicate' consumption of cultural products and the display of 'taste' ['Geschmack'] falls to women in

[56] Peter Rummenhöler mentions Clemens Brentano's 'Hör, es klingt die Flöte wieder' from *Die lustigen Musikanten*, 1802 in Clemen Brentano, *Werke*, ed. by Wolfgang Frühwald, Bernhard Gajek and Friedhelm Kemo (Munich: Hanser, 1968), quoted in Rummenhöller, 'Hören', 177.

[57] Kittler, *Networks*, 124.

[58] Friedrich Heinrich Christian Schwarz, *Grundriss einer Theorie der Mädchenerziehung in Hinsicht auf die mittleren Stände* (Jena, 1792): 'die schöpferische Kraft des Genies' … 'von dem schönen Geschlecht verbreitet sich der Geschmack auf das ernsthafte männliche, und auf die ganze Gesellschaft, und die Welt gewinnt dadurch'. Quoted in Kittler, *Networks*, 125, translation modified.

[59] Ludmilla Jordanova, 'Melancholy refection: Constructing an identity for unveilers of nature', in Stephen Bann (ed.), *Frankenstein: Creation and Modernity* (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), 60–76: 72.

this culture, then it is clear for Wackenroder that consumption and the feminine sensitivities that it invokes generate in men the need to unleash the productivity of the male author; on encountering the 'threat' of feminine compromise ('mere' consumption, 'mere' *Verkehr*) to the masculine monopoly of discourse distribution, the author must effect a redoubling of the security of his access to the channels of that distribution. Listening to music occasions the corrective discipline of the textual 'voice' of the masculine as a strategy for disambiguating gender in response to 'feminine' listening.[60] In this, as Kittler has shown, the masculine 'voice' of philosophy often speaks loudest and the anxieties caused by consuming are symptoms of a masculine economy of creative production that, on the one hand, posits the 'goods' of that production as worthy in themselves and, on the other, marks the consumption of those goods as tainted, problematically imbricated in a fleshly pleasuring venality, indelibly marked as feminine so as to other it from the *Bildung* of the good bourgeois male. Masculinity seems to have consistently sought to discipline itself by wielding the feminine as that which must be overcome, sidestepped or, worst of all, possessed absolutely.

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling approaches this problematic – the apparently irreconcilable contradiction generated by a discourse network that understands the display of consumption as a core operator of male personality formation whilst nonetheless marking that consumption as dangerously feminine – more explicitly than Wackenroder. In particular, as we shall see, Schelling accords to what he terms 'hearing' [*Gehör*] a determining role in 'solving' (or, better, unravelling) the problematic of the two apparently irreconcilable sides of *Selbstbildung*, the cultivation of the self through education. He attempts to construct a system of the arts, borne out of his epistemological 'system' worked out in *System des transzendentalen Idealismus* (1800), that integrates (but does not blithely conflate) production and consumption into a philosophical system of the arts. Through a systematic consideration of *Gehör* ['hearing'], in particular, Schelling attempts to locate the 'moment' (the narrative is of course grounded on a fantasy of the historical origins of music), just before music comes-to-be (just before that very 'beginning' of music's self-sufficiency), where the conditions of possibility for music are generated. In other words, Schelling conceives of listening (and hearing – he makes little attempt to distinguish between them) as generating that foundational moment before music, as facilitating the imagination of music, its very *necessity*. This characteristic figuration of materials in terms of their beginnings can certainly be understood as a strictly philosophical articulation framed by the question as to how to account for the way in which we make and use material things. This primary question is addressed, in a characteristically 'Idealist' manner, by examining how those materials come to be 'in and of themselves'.

Let us begin, at the 'beginning', with a consideration of this *necessity* and self-sufficiency of music in listening and, in particular, the very notion of beginnings themselves. In the beginning, Schelling seems to suggest, there is no beginning,

[60] For more on this, see the next chapter of this book.

but the trace of that which will always already have become, that which is already before it. Žižek's characterization of Schelling's materialist contribution to German philosophy addresses the question of this ground of beginning (and thus, from our queer perspective, the question of the *fantasy* of ground).[61] Žižek's argument runs something like this: if what the Idealists have called *logos* or the Absolute (or the 'primordial act of decision' that very central concept of all concepts, the 'centre' of the system, as it were) can be construed as the teasing out of 'coming-to-be' from 'being-as-such' – of the coming into motion from rest (therefore a splitting of 'motion' from 'stasis') – and if, furthermore, this starting point, the most general level of the system (the Word, the Absolute, *logos*) is the bringing-into-motion of the most general level of consciousness, then the very 'beginning' (proper) is something which *precedes* all this. The 'primordial act of decision' is clearly a *transformation*, since, strictly speaking, before that 'beginning' there already *is*. Schelling's philosophical system is addressed precisely to the question as to how the absolute circularity and self-sufficiency of that moment before the Word, its 'absolute freedom' from the necessity of desire, can 'become' (in the sense of setting itself in motion) of its own accord; and it is this category, 'freedom' or self-sufficiency, which, more than any other, occupied Schelling from his early *Naturphilosophie* of the *Ideen* and *Erster Entwurf*,[62] through to his so-called 'theological' late works. The problematics of the 'beginning' and a questioning of how we might understand the primordial act of decision are fundamental to an understanding of Schelling's philosophical project, which rigorously *rejects* the notion of origin or source and which, in what seems like a strikingly 'contemporary' and sceptical gesture, refuses both the Idealist primacy of logos and the materialists' naïve belief in the mechanics of nature (and matter). This is a philosophical 'system' shot through with a disquiet at the disintegration of concept from matter, 'Ideal' from 'Real', and can thus be read, at its most radical, as a critique of the reverie of origins, a challenge to the metaphysical presumption of the fixity of the beginning, since, whenever one thinks to have discovered a beginning, a ground, an origin, there is always something *before* it. There has been much written recently on the 'contemporaneity' of Schelling's

[61] 'How, then should one begin an essay on Schelling? Perhaps the most appropriate way is by focusing on the *problem of Beginning itself*, the crucial problem of German Idealism – suffice it to recall Hegel's detailed elaboration of this problem in his *Science of Logic*. Schelling's "materialist" contribution is best epitomized by his fundamental thesis according to which, to put it bluntly, *the true Beginning is not at the beginning*: there is something that precedes the Beginning itself – a rotary motion whose vicious cycle is broken, in a gesture analogous to the cutting of the Gordian knot, by the Beginning proper that is, the primordial act of decision.' Žižek, *Remainder*, 13.

[62] Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur als Einleitung in das Studium dieser Wissenschaft* [1797]; *Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie*, [1799] first published Eßlingen: J. G. Cotta, 1859, ed. by K. F. A. Schelling (reprographic edition, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1980).

philosophy, not least by Žižek himself,[63] and there are very good reasons to read Schelling as a radical.

The contagion of hearing

Schelling makes his contribution to the history of ideas about listening by engaging, paradoxically, in an elaborate detour around the sense of hearing, and it is the mechanics of this detour that speak in very telling ways of listening as an *ideengeschichtlicher Begriff* or category of the history of ideas. There is a crucial link to Wackenroder here and one which I have attempted to articulate elsewhere:[64] what Wackenroder intuits through the technologies of poetry as an encounter with music's material self-sufficiency, Schelling articulates through a philosophical distribution of discourse, projecting the very stuff of music onto a systematic web of connectivities, describing music (or, rather, 'sonority' in the first instance) as an 'informing of the infinite into the finite':

> §76. The indifference ["Indifferenz"] of the informing of the infinite into the finite, taken purely as indifference, is *sonority*. Or, within the informing of the infinite into the finite, indifference can emerge only as *sonority*.[65]

[63] See Malcolm Bowie's *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1993); Žižek, *Remainder*; Ian Biddle, 'F. W. J. Schelling's *Philosophie der Kunst*: An emergent semiology of music', in Ian Bent (ed.), *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 25–36.

[64] Biddle, 'Autonomy', especially 133, 198, 209, 210–215 and 210 n. 273.

[65] '§76. Die Indifferenz der Einbildung des Unendlichen ins Endliche rein als Indifferenz aufgenommen ist Klang. Oder: In der Einbildung des Unendlichen ins Endliche kann die Indifferenz, als Indifferenz, nur als Klang hervortreten'. *Philosophie der Kunst* ([1806?] Eßlingen: J. G. Cotta, 1859; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 132. Trans. by Douglas W. Stott, *The Philosophy of Art* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 107. First published in 1859 by Schelling's son Karl F. A. Schelling, the work is constructed from several sets of lectures given by Schelling in Jena and Würzburg, at those universities in 1802, 1802/1803 and 1804/1805. The latter set, given at Würzburg constitutes a reworking and expansion of the earlier lectures given in 1802/1803 at Jena. K. F. A. Schelling's edition takes from all three sets and remains now the standard text. Most modern editions, however, also attempt to incorporate the *Ergänzungen* into the main text, as do most modern English translations because the 1859 edition placed those extracts duplicated elsewhere in the *Sämtliche Werke* in appendices. These *Ergänzungen* include the following: *Ergänzung 1* – from the *Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums* given in 1803, the '14. Vorlesung: Über Wissenschaft der Kunst, in Bezug auf das akademische Studium', V, 344–352; *Ergänzung 2* – from the 'Achte Vorlesung: Über die historische Konstruktion des Christentums', from the same set of lectures V, 287ff.; extracts from the *Kritischer Journal der Philosophie* including the treatise [*Abhandlung*] on the relationship between the philosophy of nature and transcendental (general) philosophy

The 'finite' and the 'infinite' represent two conceptual poles (or *Potenzen*) of Schelling's bifurcating system. That system, an attempt to make sense of apparently irreconcilable opposites, makes room not only for binarisms, but also for movements between the two points of any binarism – hence here the '*informing* of the infinite into the finite'. The other term that begs explanation here is *Indifferenz*, which is best understood as a point in the system where two 'lower' conceptual poles find some single point of resolution or conceptual equilibrium in which both poles can be held together as elements of a 'higher' concept. The 'finite' and the 'infinite' are usually invoked at a very general level of the system and gesture upwards in the system to Schelling's primary division of the Real and the Ideal. Synonyms of finitude in this system include 'matter', 'the Real', or any element of the system that can be productively related to things possessing measurability, whereas infinitude calls up an array of synonyms that embrace conceptuality, ideation and the spiritual, 'the Ideal'. Thus, the description above of sonority ['Klang', later also 'Sonorität' and 'Klanghaftigkeit'] as an 'Indifferenz' would seem to suggest that Schelling understands sonority as some kind of higher-level conceptual equilibrium in a network of categories. Here two opposed terms (finitude and infinitude) find some kind of mutual implication at this higher level.

A key observation Schelling makes in his system of the arts, elaborated in particular in *Philosophie der Kunst* (1802–1806), is that music is the 'most real' of the arts. This suggests that music has a certain qualitative function in the larger system, that it represents an 'outer' form of that system. It also brings together or frames at a higher level two lower poles. In this case *sound* and *body* are the lower-level poles and they are located on the system's 'Real' side. In an elaboration of good organicist logic, this Real side forms in itself a higher 'Indifferenz' of a lower pair of poles, whilst itself nonetheless constituting one of two poles of an even higher indifference. Figure 1.1 is a representation of this tiered system of binarisms and their upper level indifferences.

Sonority, as a working concept or category of the system here, relies on the ability of a body to resonate and that ability is already 'in' the body, already part of what makes it what it is, but the observation that is *has* that quality requires a characterization of the body in terms of something that is *external* to it, the *quality of resonance*. Hence 'unity' or 'indifference' is a way of re-framing (re-perceiving) immanent categories 'from above' that are already present, but in a very important sense we can only 'posit' these immanent categories in the first place by thinking from the perspective of that higher unity. In other words, what we have here is a powerful demonstration of the primary concern of Schelling's

– 'Abhandlung über das Verhältnis der Naturphilosophie zur Philosophie überhaupt', V, 121ff. Other *Ergänzungen* are not so useful for our purpose here. These include an extract from the *Kritischer Journal der Philosophie*, 'Ueber Dante in philosophischer Beziehung' and 'Ueber das Verhältniß der Naturphilosophie zur Philosophie überhaupt', available in the *Sämtliche Werke*, V, 152–163 and 106–108 respectively.

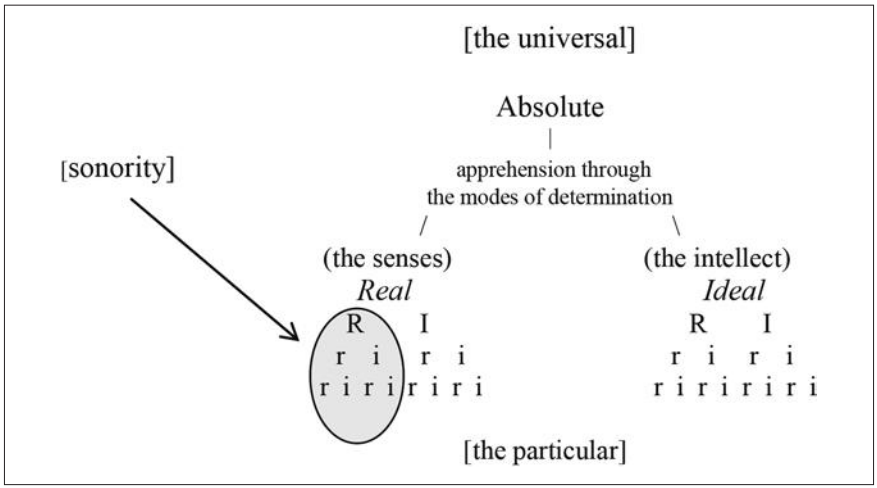


Figure 1.1 A schematic representation of Schelling's Potenzen in the organic structure of the Absolute with sonority as the informing of the infinite into the finite

system, how to account for the world from the perspective of 'reason' whilst nonetheless recognizing that this 'reason' has powerful agency in the very making of that world. The way we construe the world, we might say, partakes *in* it.

So what does it mean to place sonority on the 'Real' side of the structure? Categories that are 'Real' for Schelling are invariably those that deal with things we apprehend *through our senses*, things that are 'corporeal' or have material existence and which strive for finite (particular) concrete form. The notion that music is the 'most real' of the arts is thus grounded in the observation above that sonority (or better for our purposes here, the quality of 'soundness') functions as an indifference ['Indifferenz'] – in other words, sound represents a certain kind of continuity between two states or 'potencies' ['Potenzen'] on the furthest most 'Real' side of the system.[66] A crucial element in the determination of whether something belongs to the Real or the Ideal potency of this system can be seen in Schelling's emphasis on the senses. If the mode of determination (the technology, if you like) through which we perceive a phenomenon determines (or, at least,

[66] In this, Schelling articulates something quite extraordinarily close to Jacques Lacan's notion of the Real: as that which 'is absolutely without fissure', the Real always lies beyond any possible linguistic appropriation, always a supplement to the symbolic order and always 'unimaginable' from within the symbolic order. See Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar. Book II. The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis, 1954–55*, trans. by Sylvana Tomaselli (New York: Norton; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 97.

plays an important part in the formation of) its nature then a crucial element in our understanding of music for Schelling is our *listening* to it: the sense of hearing thus becomes a crucial operator.

I think the best way to try to understand the role of the *Potenzen* in Schelling's system is to conceive of them as a systematic working out of the problematics of dualistic thinking in German Idealism. They constitute a way of dealing with the disruptive feminizing contagion of consumption, as engaged in by the senses, drawing those senses back into a universalizing distributive system that somehow 'accounts' for sensual contagion and yet allows for that *difference* to remain as a constitutive part of the system: the *Potenzen*, posited at their most general in the highest antimony of the 'Real' (and its opposite, the 'Ideal'), embrace *both* a duality 'given' as it were in the natural world (biological sex, for example) *and* the conceptual tendency to replicate that duality (gender, for example). Apparent disunity, or the diversity of things, comes about in Schelling's system as a result *both* of the perspective from which the things are posited *and* of the givenness of that duality in the thing in itself. For Schelling we can never truly know which came first, the 'givenness' of a thing or our construction or 'determination' ['Bestimmung'] of it – no origins, no beginnings.

So, to return to the proposition that sonority is an 'indifference', what Schelling is doing here is using sonority as a 'node' in his system, connecting the materiality of the resonating object to the flight of sound from that body via the *potential* of that object to resonate. Thus, as we have already seen, what allows us to make the connection between sound and body here is the ability of the body to resonate, that quality that lies outside of the body as a general characteristic of certain kinds of bodies:

> It [sonority] is pure as such and is *indifference* only to the extent that it is separated from the body and is a form unto itself, as an absolute form.[67]

This 'separateness' from the body is important here in that, in order to exist at a higher level in the system, a concept or thing must demonstrate a self-sufficiency, a quality that raises it up above the surfaces of things into the realm of a higher *Potenz*.[68]

Kittler has shown how, in the 1800 network, a certain rapprochement between poetry and philosophy was reached and cites Schelling as a significant contributor to that rapprochement.[69] What Kittler terms the 'give and take' of Schelling's

[67] 'Rein als solche und als Indifferenz ist er [der Akt der Einpflanzung] sie nur, inwiefern er von dem Körper abgesondert, als Form für sich ist, als absolute Form'. *Philosophie*, 133. *Philosophy*, 108.

[68] The parallel with Wackenroder's figure of the dead child is quite striking, I think.

[69] 'Given that philosophy circa 1800 had anything but a one-sided, parasitic relationship to Poetry, the two discourses did not cancel each other out. Fichte and Schiller soon put their conflict behind them. Fichte's demand that speculative and aesthetic writing

system [‘ein Speil von Geben und Nehmen’[70]] is symptomatic of a certain anxiety (or structural question) about ‘contradictions’. Schelling approaches the distinctiveness of philosophy and poetry by positing their difference ‘upwards’ to a higher-level indifference that figures the particularity of the distinction between poetry and philosophy as a microcosm of the general distinction between the higher order potences. The claim that Schelling makes for sonority can be construed in this context, within the system’s wider attempt to embrace the putative (or, as he would put it, ‘intuited’ [‘eingebildete’]) differences between different medialities. And the term is not simply a by-product of the system – the German verb *bilden* is that same verb which gives us the substantive *Bildung* and the prefix simply intensifies the formative qualities of this action. Indeed, these *intuited* or *eingebildete* differences – figured by Schelling (although he talks of the relationship between philosophy and *art*) in a short passage from the *Philosophie der Kunst* as ‘the contradictions of phenomenal appearance’ [‘die Gegensätze der Erscheinung’][71] – are *particularities* of contradiction that can be subsumed into the higher union, and so on until we reach the highest (most general) level of *Differenz* in the Real and the Ideal. One way to understand this migration up the system is as operating in the service of the great goal of *Selbst*[*ein*]*bildung* or self-intuiting. Sonority should thus also be understood here as a projection of this logic: it functions as the indifference of the body and sound or, at a higher (more general) level in the system, of stillness and vibration, and as a microcosm of how to negotiate contradictions. So, if ‘indifference’ is the identity of two antitheses or a connection of two apparently incommensurate states, then the indifference which structures sonority must attempt to deal with the contradictions of the corporeal and the sonoric as a localized expression of a higher order. Here is how Schelling attempts this:

be on an equal footing was withdrawn in a conciliatory gesture by Schelling and others, in that they had philosophy issue into Poetry and Nature only at the end of its worldwide odyssey. More fundamental than the momentary flare-up of 1795 was a systematic connivance of both discourses, a game of give and take in which each stabilized the other and both endowed one another with the desired “effect for all following ages”.’ Kittler, *Networks*, 157–158.

[70] Friedrich Kittler, *Aufschreibesysteme 1800/1900* (Berlin: Fink Verlag, 1985) trans. by Michael Metteer *Discourse Networks 1800/1900* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 201.

[71] Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, *Philosophie der Kunst* (Eßlingen: J. G. Cotta, [1806] 1859; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 387; trans. by Douglas W. Stott, *The Philosophy of Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 5–6.

> [Indifference] is found only in sonority, for sonority is on the one hand living and active – for itself – and on the other hand a mere dimension in time, though not in space.[72]

Whilst the 'only' ['nur'] here refers to this localized corner of the system and is not meant to exclude similar indifferences in other corners of the system, it nonetheless points to a crucial characteristic of sonority, that it is dualistic, encompassing both an animated self-sufficient (very much like Wackenroder's *freie Willkür* or 'free will') and an inanimate 'emptiness' or 'flatness' as posited across time and, perhaps most crucially, that it is *particular*, local. The parallel with Wackenroder's duality of distraction/disengagement is quite suggestive here. Thus, at the higher level, the abstracted qualities of animacy and materiality find a meeting point and it is this meeting point which Schelling's system is always seeking to arrive at. Eventually, however, as we shall see, it becomes clear that the system cannot deliver on this promise and it is, in particular, the relationship between what Schelling terms 'magnetism' and listening that shows the system up as, inevitably, self-unravelling.

Hearing and/as Magnetism

That striking moment in Schelling's argument comes when, after several elaborations of the properties of sonority and sound, he enters into a protracted consideration of what he terms 'the sense of hearing' [*Gehör*]:

> We must add to this view of sonority that of the *sense of hearing*. The root of the sense of hearing resides within anorganic nature, within magnetism. The hearing organ is merely magnetism that has developed to organic perfection.[73]

The connection of hearing to magnetism is puzzling here: as we shall see, it opens up a striking line of argument, which leads ultimately to a system-wide destabilization. In both the *Erster Entwurf* and the *Ideen*, Schelling attempts to account for magnetism in his 'speculative physics' as *anorganic* nature, as a process confined to a corner of the system of the *Naturphilosophie*:

[72] 'Diese ist nur im Klang, denn dieser ist einerseits lebendig – für sich –, anderseits eine bloße Dimension in der Zeit, nicht aber im Raume'. *Philosophie*, 133; *Philosophy*, 108.

[73] 'Wir müssen unmittelbar mit dieser Ansicht des Klangs die des Gehörs verbinden. – Die Wurzel des Gehörsinns liegt schon in der anorganischen Natur, im Magnetismus. Das Gehörorgan selbst ist nur der zur organischen Vollkommenheit entwickelte Magnetismus'. *Philosophie*, 134; *Philosophy*, 109.

Organische	**Allegemenine**	**Anorganische Natur**
Bildungsbetrieb	Licht	Chemischer Proceß
Irritabilität	Elektricität	Elektrischer Proceß
Sensibilität	Ursache des Magnetismus?	Magnetismus?
[***Organic***	***general (universal)***	***anorganic***
formative drive	*light*	*chemical process*
irritability	*electricity*	*electrical process*
sensibility	*cause of magnetism?*	*magnetism?*]

This schema from the introduction to the *Entwurf*[74] construes magnetism as a problem, as something that the system cannot quite account for. This point is also made (although somewhat differently) by Krell, who suggests that the question mark works here as a kind of 'truncation' of the system.[75] A question mark similarly hovers over the sense of hearing or *Gehör* since, according to the *Philosophie der Kunst*, it is rooted in magnetism, a dark corner of the system that Schelling leaves unaccounted for, at the extreme anorganic edges, rather like Žižek's 'indivisible remainder'.[76] Hearing (and the hearing organ, which is 'anorganic nature developed to organic perfection', another example of how Schelling's system can also account for slippages across poles) is an uncertainty raised up to a systematic function. If, as Schelling suggests in the *Entwurf* and *Ideen* (and building on Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*), organic properties are those of self-sufficiency, self-government, then the anorganic is that which is *governed*, *Other*-sufficient. The sense of hearing thereby forms a discursive space in which the mechanics of magnetism find self-sufficient expression (perfection) in the organic matter of the ear (the *sense* of hearing is the higher order under which the particularity of the hearing organ operates).

One way to understand this moment is to contextualize this drive to integrate listening into the system by re-orientating our approach to this self-sufficient system away from a 'philosophical' explanation towards one which construes this system-work as engaging in quite specific and historically contingent *cultural work*. Hence, we should ask not just how the argument works in and of itself, but also why the argument seemed to have such *force* for Schelling. We have already discussed some of the ways in which Wackenroder's oeuvre addresses the problematic of *Bildung* and, as we have already seen, there is good reason to use the same orientation here: if the sense of hearing is to be aligned with so-called 'magnetism', as its structural homonym, so to speak, and the question mark we

74 *Entwurf*, 7.

75 Krell, *Contagion*, 85.

76 Žižek, *Remainder*, 214.

spoke of above is clearly a crucial marker of a certain shortfall in the system, then is not that shortfall redolent of the same problematic that Wackenroder was trying to deal with – how to engage in the appropriate mode of consumption of cultural goods without falling foul of a feminized, venal *Verkehr*? Indeed, that question mark is the very place in Schelling's system that does the most work: hearing finds no rest in this system, it elides one pole into the other and fundamentally disturbs discourse distribution. Once again, listening (or hearing) functions as a rupture in the flow of discourse, and needs to be disciplined in some way.

In order to demonstrate how this disruption works, I want to try to integrate Schelling's limited remarks on the sense of hearing into his broader (early) oeuvre by attempting to sketch out a schematic representation of that corner of the system in which sonority is located. Drawing on both the *Erster Entwurf* and the *Philosophie der Kunst*, we can construct a diagrammatic representation of the interconnectedness of the elements of Schelling's theory of listening around a central point which, in the outline of the *Entwurf*, he terms 'allgemeine Natur', a kind of catch-all conceptual *empty space*; here there is a similar gap or empty space in the system which works, nonetheless, to hold it together (Figure 1.2).

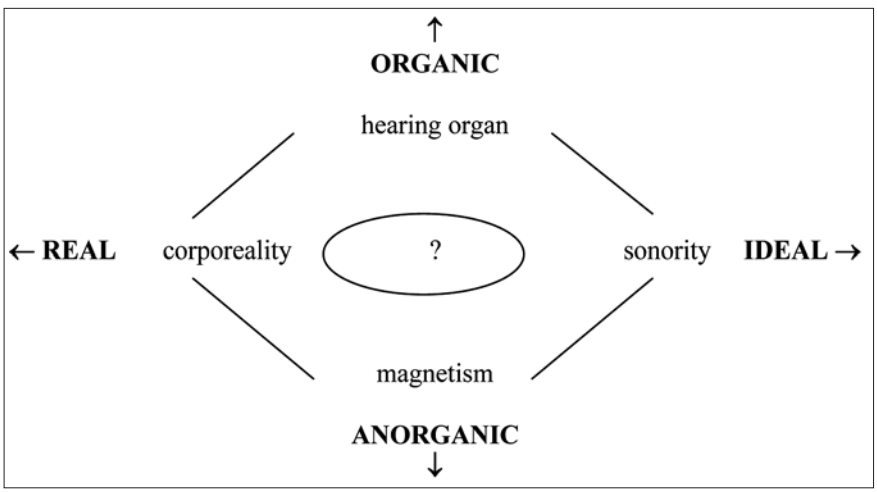


Figure 1.2 The elements of Schelling's theory of hearing

What we have here, rather in the manner of a Greimasian square, is a mapping of two conceptual pairs: Real/Ideal and Organic/Anorganic. In this representation, the two pairs of poles work on each other and sketch out a territory in which hierarchy is flattened for the interplay of points on a flat surface. The logic of tiering, of resolving upwards into the next *Indifferenz*, is thus suspended here. It is striking, although in the light of our reading of Wackenroder, Novalis and

Hölderlin not altogether surprising, that the act of listening, or hearing (as we have seen, Schelling appears to make no distinction, which is worth note in itself) appears to be absent here, 'reduced' (if that is the right term) to the organic perfection of the hearing organ. In other words, Schelling seeks to limit hearing and listening to the potentiality of that sense organ as given in the body. Hearing is firmly on the side of organic nature, of organic matter as *potentiality*.

The 'absence' (or hiding away) of *Gehör* or 'listening/hearing' should not be confused with the unnamed centre that works as an impossible (absent) resolution of all four terms – an indifference of indifferences, in Schelling's terms, a fantasy that holds this world view together. The schematization above, of course, is not Schelling's but helps us think through the role of the determinations ['Bestimmungen'] or 'Potenzen' in this 'systematisation' of listening/hearing: each determination or interpretative frame allows for a different set of allegiances, connections. I have, as already intimated, deliberately ambiguated the 'centre' around which these relationships operate: the centre is clearly an absence, an abstracted conditional 'as if'. Hence, the unnamed centre, a structural homonym of 'general nature' elsewhere in the system, works to ground this corner of Schelling's system in the larger system by governing it from without, from *elsewhere* in the larger system – that 'void' is empty because the terms by which it can be grasped exist outside this corner of the system, outside its formal logic. We might thus represent this as in Figure 1.3, where the key functional element of the 'centre' of this local corner of the system is governed from without.

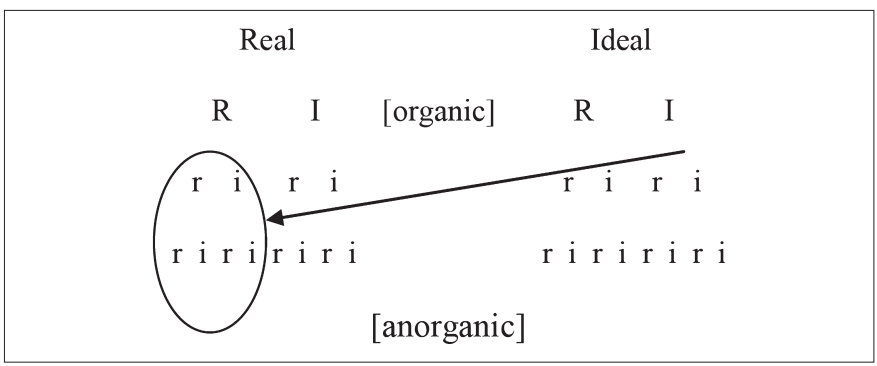


Figure 1.3 Centrifugal forces in Schelling's system

Here the locality of this corner of Schelling's system is firmly anchored in another category of the system, some distance from it. This external category, acting on this corner of the system, helps outline for us the structure of argument that attends Schelling's notion of *Gehör* in his system of the arts: *Gehör* works to extend the system from its own material corner and out into the broader system

of determinations or potencies. Or, to put it another way, *Gehör* is the silent determiner here that radically destabilizes the system. Either way, *Gehör* does an inordinate amount of work without finding a stable place in the system.

If we take the right side of Figure 1.2 (The elements of Schelling's theory of hearing) to represent a certain mode of determination (a way of ordering the categories), then we can see how emphasis on sonority as an indifference of the hearing organ (the organic) and pure process or magnetism (the inorganic) emphasizes *sound production*: the making of sound is the higher level (or 'indifference') in which the organic and inorganic attain their goal. Thus, construing sonority as an indifference places emphasis on the productive side of the equation, insisting on the agency of sound 'itself'. In this reorientation of our schema, the highest term is sonority (sound), which gives to music a productive role in presenting itself to the senses. Hence we might represent this articulation as in Figure 1.4.

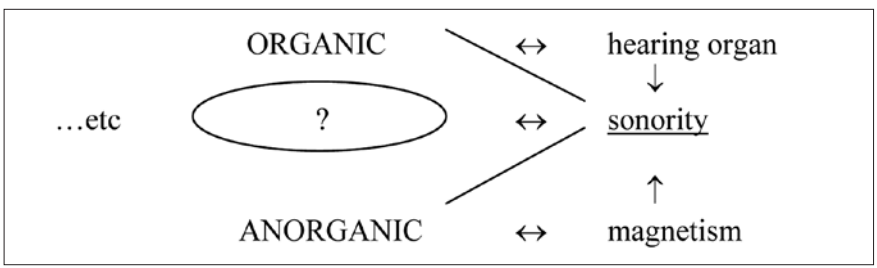


Figure 1.4 Sonority as indifference: productive agency

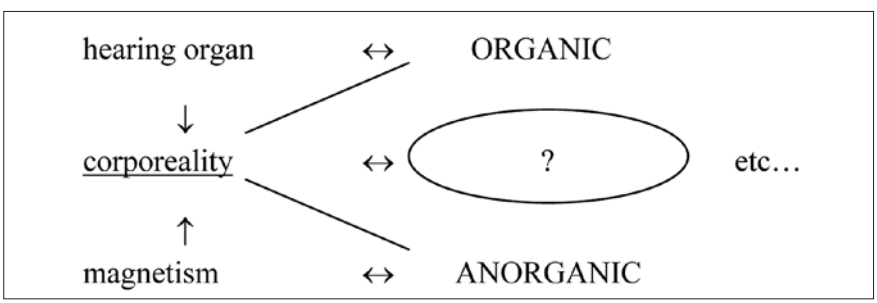


Figure 1.5 Corporeality as indifference: consumption

Conversely, an emphasis on the *consuming* side of the equation (the left of Figure 1.2) refigures the relationships as in Figure 1.5, replacing sonority with the seminal property of the Real, corporeality. Hence, where sonority stands for

the *self*-evident production of sound, corporeality stands for the *Other*-evident (i.e. beholden to something outside itself) consumption of sound back into the body. In the first case, the 'goal' of the philosophical question is to posit sonority as the indifference, sound as the form in which the bringing of a body to vibrate finds ultimate form in the outlet of sound: here the emphasis is on *making*. In the second case, the 'goal' of the philosophical question is to posit the *corporeal* as indifference, the body of material as the 'thing' that is consumed: here the emphasis is on *taking*.

In each case, the placement of *Gehör* (or the sense of hearing) in the system is complex since it seems to operate as a supplement to the systematic exposition of the elements of the theory. The problem here is the unsystematic juxtaposition of the *hearing organ* and the *sense of hearing*: Schelling neither conflates the two nor delineates clearly how they relate to each other or to the broader scheme. Both are 'rooted' in magnetism, the dark corner of his philosophy of nature, and both seem to bring with them uncertainty, instability:

> In coherence or magnetism in and for themselves, however, the Ideal principle *passed over completely into the corporeal*. The demand, however, was that the informing of unity into multiplicity appear purely as such, as form in and for itself. This occurs only in sonority, for sonority = magnetism, though detached from corporeality, as it were the essential nature itself of magnetism, the substance.[77]

This relatively small corner of the system (it occupies no more than a few pages in Schelling's *Philosophie der Kunst*, for example) stands nonetheless as an exemplary moment in the exposition of one of two dynamic tendencies within the system, the migration of the Ideal into the Real side, of conceptual, 'ideas' into richly semantic 'things'.[78] Note, in particular, how Schelling insists here on the *detachment* or sundering of sonority from the body 'von der Körperlichkeit abgesondert': this sundering is striking here, especially since his corner of the system is governed by a tendency towards *material*. Removing the body here resonates strongly with Wackenroder's notion of music as having a 'freie[n] Willkür', a will of its own. It is as if sound must be granted a special autonomy, 'free' from the intervention of listening subjects (here reduced simply to *Gehör*), 'free' from the messy particularity of what happens when one listens.

[77] 'In der Cohärenz oder dem Magnetismus an und für sich war aber das ideelle Princip ganz übergangen ins Körperliche. Die Forderung aber war, daß die Einbildung der Einheit in die Vielheit rein als solche, als Form für sich erscheine. Dieß aber geschieht nur im Klang, den dieser = Magnetismus, aber von der Körperlichkeit abgesondert, gleichsam das An-sich des Magnetismus selbst, die Substanz'. *Philosophie*, 108; *Philosophy*, 108. My italics.

[78] The other tendency in this system is the 'positing of the finite into the infinite', that tendency of material things to drift into larger conceptual groupings, larger ideations.

One way to understand this tendency to autonomy here is as an expression of Schelling's understanding of the consumption of cultural goods. Schelling, like his contemporaries, seeks to obliterate the social and political specifics of the messy moment of listening in favour of a serene play of ontologies, 'free' from the vicissitudes of venal *Verkehr*, purified of the chatter of public intercourse. His is an extreme vision of high culture as residing in a self-sufficient space, as beholden, in the final analysis, only to its own internal characteristics, as if always already pre-existing the moment of its consumption. Indeed, consumption is precisely that which is disciplined to the margins here since, as centred first and foremost on the body, which, as we have seen, operates in this culture as the privileged site of the feminine, it represents a disturbance. The sense of hearing (and, by implication, listening as a practice) is grounded here in the habitus (the (corpo-) Real): as we have seen, the marking of this subaltern as feminine is particularly clear when worked through against romantic notions of production – the female reader, female listener, as against the male writer, male composer.

One of the reasons, then, that the sense of hearing (and listening more generally) wreaks such havoc here, is that it constitutes a kind of bearing witness to the historical contingency of cultural production, and lays bare the impossibility of the universal address of philosophy, poetry and music. In Figure 1.6 I have attempted to schematize Schelling's twofold dualistic structure of this corner of the system. The upper and lower poles (organic and anorganic) are crossed by the real and the ideal.

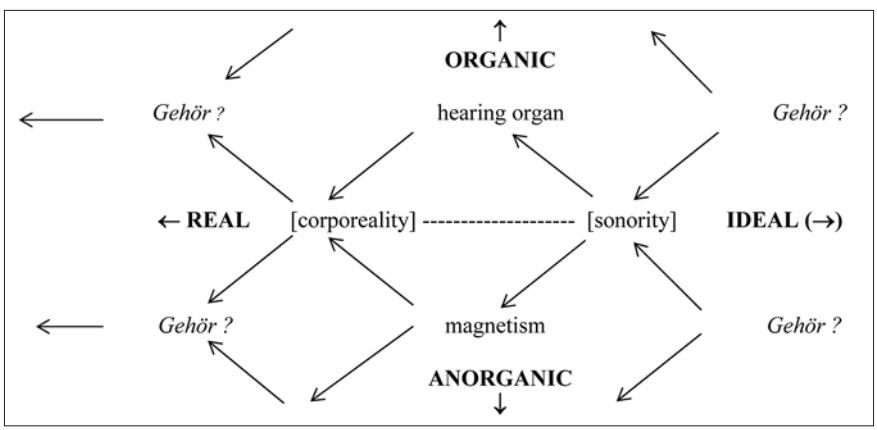


Figure 1.6 Accounting for *Gehör* in Schelling's system

The migration of the Ideal into the Real ('the Ideal principle *passed over completely into the corporeal*') is marked in Figure 1.6 by diagonal lines, which also indicate a migration from anorganic to organic nature and vice versa (see, for example, 'The

hearing organ is merely magnetism that has developed to organic perfection'). In all of the 'determinations' we have projected here, Schelling's system seeks consistently to 'integrate' (or perhaps better we might say 'discipline') the consuming modalities into the productive *process* (and ultimately, perhaps, the product 'itself', what Hegel called the *Ding an sich*) by attenuating the operational visibility of production in itself (as if to make it invisible such that it functions unimpeded, like 'invisible' masculinity itself): there are very few authors or painters and certainly no composers in the *Philosophie der Kunst* since the qualities that Schelling struggles to enunciate in music are its *ontological* qualities, not, ostensibly, its 'effects'. In this, Schelling differs from Wackenroder, who sought to conflate or problematize the separation of ontological and aesthesic modalities, yet the fundamental motivation is the same in both: to erase listening by 'consuming' it back into the sonic material – listening is folded back into the stuff of music such that the distribution of sonic materials along clearly circumscribed channels can be assured without the troublesome interruption of dissident (feminized, fixated, distracted, luxurious) listening. Just as Wackenroder had to discipline the outburst 'welche herrliche Fülle der Bilder!' for drawing attention to the mechanics of the operation of poetic discourse, so the consumption of music in Schelling's system can find no fixed or productive expression. His theorization of music is itself an *act of consuming*, and the troublesome fullness of the sense of hearing (*Gehör*) in Schelling's system can be explained in this way – it is a 'proxy' for the very *operation* of Schelling's discourse and, if allowed to speak for itself, it disenchants the fullness of his discourse, draws attention to its internal artifice, and breaks the charmed circle of self-sufficiency.

First Coda: The Hegelian *Strom* or the Impossibility of Listening

I began this chapter with a short examination of the imagery of the *Strom* or current in Hölderlin's poem 'Der blinde Sänger'. That imagery, marking the ubiquity of notions of discourse as a kind of flow, goes some way to explaining the ambivalence to listening in Schelling and Wackenroder: it captures a tendency in romantic discourse to require its addressee to function as a subject wrought by the flow of discourse, interpellated, to use Althusser's famous formulation.[79] The 'triumphant Idealist' Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) sought to embrace this notion of flow, the very movement of discourse itself; for him it overwhelms the

[79] It is tempting here to note in the order of symbolization a patterning of *Bildung* around three processes – interpellation, healing and listening. They seem to relate to each other as non-equivalencies that can nonetheless also operate within a quasi-homological relationship: perhaps the best way to understand this structure here is to think them as metonymically related (they are close by, but not continuous) and they can therefore slip into each other's space quietly and unnoticed. This viral structuring is something Krell make much of in his *Contagion*.

particularities of consumption (and listening in particular) altogether. Indeed, for Hegel, this generality of discourse as flow, as a *Selbstwerden* or 'self-becoming', is purely 'negative':

> because it [the Concept] is absolute negativity, it sunders itself and posits itself as the *negative* or the *other* of itself; and further, because as yet it is only the *immediate* [Concept], this positing or differentiation is characterised by the fact that the moments become *indifferent to one another* and each becomes for itself; in this *partition*, its unity is still only an external *connexion*. As such *connexion* of its moments, which are posited as *self-subsistent* and *indifferent*, it is *judgement*.[80]

'Negativity' in Hegel invariably refers to process, to movement, and so the Concept is always *in movement* in that the coming into being of a thought or idea always works in time – consciousness works in time, our sense of self is posited in and emerges through time. Yet this emergent 'Concept' [*Begriff*] is incomplete and must move to 'completion' by virtue of its 'empty' self-sufficiency: for Hegel, thought finds completion in its engagement with 'the outside'. The qualification 'absolute' (or, sometimes, 'pure') in Hegel sometimes evokes an inadequacy or pathology: take, for example, the link, in Hegel's early writings on sexuality in the Jena *Realphilosophie* (1805/1806), between emptiness and purity in which plants, 'pure' as such, are 'turned to the inside' and animals, complete, are turned to the outside.[81] The 'critique' (or better, the subordination) of 'empty' generality is commonplace in Hegel, as we see from this extract from his lectures on art:

> The subject-matter of romantic art, at least in relation to the Divine, is very circumscribed. For, first, as we have already indicated above, nature is emptied of gods; the sea, mountains, valleys, rivers, springs, time and night, as well as the general processes of nature, have lost their value in relation to the presentation and content of the Absolute. Natural forms are no longer augmented symbolically; they have been robbed of their ability to have forms and activities capable of being traits of a divinity.[82]

[80] 'weil er die absolute Negativität ist, so dirimiert er sich und setzt sich als Negative oder als das Andere seiner selbst; und zwar, weil er erst der unmittelbare ist, hat dies Setzen oder Unterscheiden die Bestimmung, daß die Momente gleichgültig gegeneinander und jedes für sich wird; seine Einheit ist in dieser Teilung nur noch äußere Beziehung. So als Beziehung seiner als selbständig und gleichgültig gesetzten Momente ist er das Urteil'. Hegel, *Wissenschaft*, 272. Trans. by A. V. Miller, *Hegel's Science of Logic* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969), 599.

[81] See also Krell, *Contagion*, 128–9.

[82] 'der Inhalt der romantischen Kunst, in Betreff auf das Göttliche wenigstens, [ist] sehr verengt. Denn erstens ist, wie wir schon oben andeuteten, die Natur entgöttert, Meer, Berg und Tal, Ströme, Quellen, die Zeit und Nacht sowie die allgemeinen Naturprozesse

It is within this disenchanted context that Hegel seeks to understand music, its 'emptiness', as expressing 'our entirely empty self, the self without any further content' ['unser ganz leeres Ich, das Selbst ohne weiteren Inhalt'].[83] If Hegel's 'purity' or 'negativity' expresses a kind of emptied out or somehow deficient wholeness, then music's position here is one bound up precisely with this insufficiency. Indeed, just as Schelling had stressed succession as the fundamental form of music, so Hegel stresses the *temporal* as a negation of the 'mere corporeality' of other manifestations of art and it is this temporality that marks music out as in some sense incomplete:

> This obliteration not of *one* dimension only but of the whole of space, purely and simply, this complete withdrawal into subjectivity of both the inner life and its external manifestation brings into complete being the *second* romantic art – music.[84]

As a 'retreat' into the inner life, music seems for Hegel to offer a higher level unity than, for example, the 'spatial sensuousness' of painting which is still marked by the materiality of its spatial existence. For Hegel, put perhaps too crudely here, the higher the unity, the less 'material' it is – a disavowal of Schelling's 'tormented' Idealism and a significant marker of what Krell terms Hegel's 'triumphant Idealism'.[85] Music is incomplete, half-formed for Hegel since its form is grounded in the 'pure negativity' that Hegel critiques elsewhere. This negativity precludes listening (and other particularities of consumption) by articulating a view of musical process as a kind of ontological flow, thereby also silencing the process by which it is encountered, consumed, listened to. Despite its 'inadequacy', Hegel nonetheless grants music this much: music's fluid self-sufficiency (however partial, however incomplete) can be called upon to safeguard the dominance in Hegel's philosophical economy of creative production over consumption. By a careful marshalling of the technologies of philosophy (logic, causality, induction,

haben ihren Wert in Betreff auf die Darstellung und den Gehalt des Absoluten verloren. Die Naturgebilde werden nicht mehr symbolisch erweitert; die Bestimmung, daß ihre Formen und Tätigkeiten fähig wären, Züge einer Göttlichkeit zu sein, ist ihnen geraubt'. G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* (Ditzingen: Reclam, 1971), 574. *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 524. Translation modified.

[83] *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik. Theorie Werkausgabe*, Bd. 15 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970), 135. Unlike the Reclam edition, the Suhrkamp edition contains most of Hotho's second edition, which is why I feel the need to switch between to two here. The Reclam edition contains only selections of the third part. *Lectures*, 891.

[84] 'Dies Tilgen nicht nur der einen Raumdimension, sondern der totalen Räumlichkeit überhaupt, dies völlige Zurückziehen in die Subjektivität nach seiten des Inneren wie der Äußerung, vollbringt die zweite romantische Kunst – die Musik'. *Vorlesungen* (Suhrkamp) 133; *Lectures*, 889. Translation modified.

[85] Krell, *Contagion*, 115ff.

deduction, inference) Hegel unfolds a vision of music as a stuff that does the superficial or 'outer' work of the highest order of art, poetry, linked in the German *Poesie* more closely to the Greek *ποίησις* (making, production, creation, magical procedure) and the highest order of discourse, philosophy.

In the *Naturphilosophie* (1817) of the *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, Hegel attempts to sketch out his theory of negativity (as he had formulated it thus far) in terms of its relation to three-dimensional space:

> Negativity which, as point, relates itself to space and develops its determinations as line and plane in space is, however, in the sphere of self-externality, equally *for itself* and so are its determinations; but, at the same time, these determinations are posited in the sphere of self-externality and thus appear as indifferent to the inert side-by-sideness of space. Negativity, thus posited for itself, is time.[86]

The emphasis here on the speculative strategies of contemporary philosophical practice underlines Kittler's view of philosophy and poetry as romantic technologies of the letter, as sanctioned deployments of historically contingent resources. A key operator in this technology is the metaphor of *location* in *space*: if determination (i.e. the way we perceive or construe something) lies 'outside' space as such and is external to it, then it is this externality which generates the possibility of the positing of points, lines and planes. Hence, to measure something is be external to it and that act of measuring presents itself to that something as *for* that thing, as acting *upon* it, *das Ding für sich*. Yet that 'externality' is never fully realisable (never 'pure' as such) since, according to Hegel, we are always 'in' space, always inside the very thing we are 'determining'. This is the conundrum of self-externality, of being *in* space but perceiving it *as if* from an imagined outside.[87] To follow Hegel's deployment of philosophical resources further, we note that, if that externality, that determination, becomes self-reliant and removes itself altogether from its object (if, in other words, it becomes fixated on itself), then it becomes what Hegel calls, quite simply, *time*:

> Time, as the negative unity of self-externality, is similarly an out-and-out abstract, ideal being. It is that being which, inasmuch as it *is*, is *not*, and inasmuch

[86] 'Die Negativität, die sich als Punkt auf den Raum bezieht und in ihm ihre Bestimmungen als Linie und Fläche entwickelt, ist aber in der Sphäre des Außersichseins ebensowohl für sich und ihre Bestimmungen darin, aber zugleich als in der Sphäre des Außersichseins setzend, dabei als gleichgültig gegen das ruhige Nebeneinander erscheinend. So für sich gesetzt, ist die Zeit.' *Naturphilosophie*, 47–48; *Nature*, 33–34. Translation modified.

[87] The modernity of this observation is striking and goes to the heart of Althusser's ideology critique.

> as it is *not*, *is*: it is *intuited* Becoming; this means that the pure moments, the immediate self-sublating differences, are determined as external, i.e. as external to *themselves*.[88]

This, in a nutshell, is Hegel's theorization of what we have been calling 'flow' (and what Hölderlin calls *Strom*), a figuration of the location of the subject that is somehow 'detached' from its object of scrutiny and turned in upon itself, a subjectivity that is 'free' and yet nonetheless dominated by the 'necessity' of its channelling. Hence, Hegel's theorization of flow insists on the steering of discourse along the appropriate channels: where Heidegger in 1942 stressed the 'distinction' in Hölderlin's appropriation of *Strom* in the medial particularity of the poeticized image of the river – recognizing the relativities of the modalities of consumption and the medialities – Hegel in 1817 will not countenance any such particularity in the various media. For Hegel, the flow of discourse is the flow of *productive force* and there can be no breaching of the channel. Time, as absolute negativity, is the very *becoming* of discourse, 'from which everything is born and by whom its offspring is destroyed'.[89] In this Saturnalian economy of discursive coercion, discourse must steer itself along a uniform and cogent channel, defending against any possibility that it might be actively consumed (redirected): as a threat to that coherence, consumption must be disciplined, straight-jacketed, in order that discourse fight off any incursion of the reader or listener into the flow of (male, authorial) subjectivity. In this coercive economy, sound must be nothing more than the *symptom* of flow:

> The sublation of space therefore consists here only in the fact that a specific sensuous material sacrifices its peaceful separateness, turns to movement, yet so vibrates in itself that every part of the cohering body not only changes its place but also struggles to replace itself in its former position.[90]

[88] 'Die Zeit, als die negative Einheit des Außersichseins ist gleichfalls ein schlechthin Abstraktes, Ideelles. – Sie ist das Sein, das, indem es ist, nicht ist, und indem es nicht ist, ist; das angeschaute Werden, d.i. daß die zwar schlechthin momentanen, d.i. unmittelbar sich aufhebenden Unterschiede die als äußerliche, d.i. jedoch sich selbst äußerliche, bestimmt sind.' *Naturphilosophie*, 48; *Nature*, 34. Translation modified.

[89] 'Aber nicht *in* der Zeit entsteht und vergeht alles, sondern die Zeit selbst ist dies *Werden*, Entstehen und Vergehen, das *seiende Abstrahieren*, der alles gebärende und seine Geburten zerstörende *Kronos*'. *Naturphilosophie*, 49; *Nature*, 35.

[90] 'Die Aufhebung des Räumlichen besteht deshalb hier nun darin, daß ein bestimmtes sinnliches Material sein ruhiges Außereinander aufgibt, in Bewegung gerät, doch so in sich erzittert, daß jeder Teil des kohärierenden Körpers seinen Ort nicht nur verändert, sondern auch sich in den vorigen Zustand zurückzuversetzen strebt.' *Vorlesungen* (Suhrkamp), 134; *Lectures*, 890. Miller's translation of *Aufhebung* as 'cancellation' is inconsistent and somewhat confusing. Wherever possible, I have used 'sublation' and its other forms 'sublate', 'sublated', etc.

The meaning of Hegel's 'critique' of negativity and of music in particular, is grounded in its 'double negativity', which he mentions in his account of sound in the *Naturphilosophie*:

> The ideality posited here is an alteration which is a double negating. The negating of the persistence, in asunderness, of the material parts is itself negated as the re-establishing of their asunderness and their cohesion; it is a *single* ideality as an alternation of the two mutually sublating determinations, the inner oscillation of the body within itself – *Sound*.[91]

The oscillation of the body, the 'alternation' as Hegel terms it, is a physical demonstration or expression of a shuttling between the determinations (asunderness – i.e. difference, splitting apart – and cohesion), oscillating between out-of-place-ness and coherent self-sufficiency. Sound thus does intriguing work in that it seems to parody the very structure of Hegel's system. In this, it draws attention to the outer structure of subjectivity without being able to outline any specific 'content', merely parodying the structure of subjectivity:

> what is alone fitted for expression in music is the object-free inner life, abstract subjectivity as such. This is our entirely empty self, the self without any further content.[92]

Sound's (and music's) parodying quality leaves it incapable of the generality of poetry since its material is grounded in the *purely* negative, in the one-sided dissolving of the now into the next now. Music's reliance on temporality or flow can only work here as a proxy for discourse itself. And listening makes little or no appearance in all of this since negativity or flow is the *necessity* (or channelling) of the self-reliance of the subject. As if to underline the absence of listening, Hegel deals with the senses in the *Naturphilosophie* without making anything but a few passing references to the sense of hearing:

> The [elements] we have mentioned so far, colour, smell and taste, are only threefold; thus we have the three senses of sight, smell and taste. Since hearing

[91] 'Die Idealität, die hierin gesetzt ist, ist eine Veränderung, die ein doppeltes Negieren ist. Das Negieren des (außereinander) Betsehens der materiellen Teile wird ebenso negiert als das Wiederherstellen ihres Außereinanderseins und ihrer Kohäsion; sie ist eine Idealität als Wechsel der einander aufhebenden Bestimmungen, das innere Erzittern des Körpers in ihm selbst, – der Klang.' *Nature*, 136; *Naturphilosophie*, 170–171. Translation modified. 'Hierin' refers here to *Elastizität*. See §§297–299 of the *Naturphilosophie*.

[92] 'Für den Musikausdruck eignet sich … nur das ganz objektlose Innere, die abstrakte Subjektivität als solche. Diese ist unser ganz leeres Ich, das Selbst ohne weiteren Inhalt.' *Vorlesungen* (Suhrkamp), 135; *Lectures*, 891.

> [*Gehör*] and touch don't come to light here, we must ask: Where does the object for these two senses have its place?[93]

Other references to hearing [sometimes also *Hören*] similarly seek to dismiss or downplay it, consistently pairing it with another sense (usually sight and sometimes touch) or relating it to debased or incomplete modalities of experience. One way in which hearing is downgraded in the *Naturphilosophie* is by construing it as connected to 'Mechanism':

> If we ask of sound why it is related to the [sense of] hearing, then we must answer: because this sense is a sense of Mechanism and is even that sense which is related to the flight from materiality into the passing over to the immaterial, psychological [*Seelenhaften*], Ideal.[94]

Mechanism, a rather lowly formulation for Hegel, is construed as that field in which materiality is posited in one of two particular ways: the first, hearing, takes flight from materiality, and the second, touch, is an intense affirmation of the material.[95] Hence, both touch and hearing are imbalanced in their 'attitude' to materiality, the one taking flight from it, the other bedding down in it. The 'purity' of these two senses thus helps us understand Hegel's critique of negativity or flow as much as his critique of positivity or stasis: both determinations are incomplete, one-sided and cannot thereby partake of a higher unity. In all Hegel's ruminations on hearing,[96] we are struck consistently by a pervasive sense of unease that finds expression in a systematic downgrading of that sense to a lower order than sight or even smell and taste. Music also is subject to this same logic, incomplete, empty, one-sided.

Yet, negativity, the primary flight from materiality, *is*, like positivity, nonetheless one side of the Hegelian coin. Its meaning is grounded in its ability to contribute to the higher unity and, as flow, it makes that contribution by directing the distribution

[93] 'Die soeben angegebenen, Farbe, Geruch, Geschmack, sind nur drei; so haben wir die drei Sinne des Gesichts, des Geruchs und des Geschmacks. Da Gehör und Gefühl hier nicht zum Vorschein kommen, so fragt sich zugleich: Wo hat das Objektive für diese zwei übrigen Sinne seinen Platz?' *Naturphilosophie*, 222. My translation.

[94] 'Fragen wir noch in Bezug auf den Klang überhaupt, warum er sich aufs Gehör bezieht, so müssen wir antworten: weil dieser Sinn ein Sinn des Mechanismus ist, und zwar eben derjenige, der sich auf das Entfliehen aus der Materialität, auf das Übergehen zum Immateriellen, Seelenhaften, Ideellen bezieht.' *Naturphilosophie*, 173. My translation.

[95] 'Alles dagegen, was spezifische Schwere und Kohäsion ist, bezieht sich auf den Sinn des Gefühls; der Tastsinn ist so der andere Sinn der mechanischen Sphäre, nämlich insofern sie die Bestimmungen der Materialität selbst enthält.' *Naturphilosophie*, 173–174.

[96] See in particular *Naturphilosophie*, 183, 223–224, 464–465, 466, 467 and also the 1830 *Philosophie des Geistes* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), 102, 103–104, 142, 156, 250.

of discourse along its route of necessity, along the pre-ordained, universalizing path that Hölderlin's 'sure one' steers us down. Hearing, as a lower order of negativity, can thus be engaged as a resource in the articulation of the generality of flow at a particular level, without allowing that particularity to overwhelm the Idealist edifice. Unlike Schelling's implicit (pessimistic) disavowal of hearing as disruptive, Hegel's disavowal is triumphant, wielding the full resources of his Idealist technology over the subversive potential of particularized consumption.

Coda: Hard and Soft Networks

In the first decade of the nineteenth century, at least in some corners, there appears to have been a certain anxiety about listening, because it represented a kind of particularity in a world in which generalities were *en vogue*. What must speak for these writers is precisely not the particularity through which one consumes discourse, but the discourse itself, its positivity in its ontological character, its negativity in its channelled flow. Yet listen the bourgeoisie undoubtedly did, in concerts patronized by aristocracy, in public subscription concerts, in soirées, intimate gatherings, in homes and, as important, in the head. How are we to square the poetic and philosophical agonies caused by listening with the overwhelming evidence from social history that listening formed a crucial part of the bourgeois early romantic experience? I think one way to understand the disquiet is to recognize the precariousness of the class consciousness of the bourgeois: Gramit has rightly suggested that the presence of aristocracy at public and patronized concerts continued to emphasize music's worth well into the nineteenth century and that, as patronage waned in that period (the conservative tastes of Austro-Hungarian emperor Franz II, 1792–1835, for example, ensured a rapid decline in the royal patronage of concerts) new forms of validation had to be found to insist on the quality of public musical life, and these were found, as Gramit puts it, in the 'inherent value' of the music itself.[97] One explanation for a certain poetic–philosophical disquiet at listening might thus be to conceive of bourgeois culture as anxious about the quality of its cultural production and as seeking to ensure the putative 'universality' of its culture whilst playing down the venality (particularity) of its consumption.

Yet, as Elias makes clear in his *History of Manners*, a crucial operator in the territorialization of bourgeois culture was its emphasis on personality and, in particular, on *Bildung* or the appropriate formation and development of the self.[98]

[97] 'Such fears for the security of the material basis of the concert provide a context for the anxiety over stylistic decline: … in a social context in which the significance of musical performance was no longer reliably established by aristocratic patronage, the inherent value of art could replace the patronage of the highest classes as guarantor of value.' Gramit, *Music*, 145.

[98] Elias, *Manners*, 26.

As part of this emphasis, the *Gelehrtenstand* or learned classes placed particular emphasis on the qualitative properties of art in the development and channelling of the personality and, as we have seen, the anxiety we encounter in the late eighteenth century in the so-called 'classical' authors about the development of the *Lesewut* or reading craze is an expression of the desire to discipline and circumscribe the reception of art. Schön has suggested that 1800 marks a particular 'change of mentality' in attitudes to reading in that the *Lesewut* comes to stand for the dangers of unbridled consumption.[99] We have seen how, in both the poetic and philosophical technologies, listening figures similarly as a dangerous incursion into the flow of universalizing cultural production. Here too, we recognize an anxiety about the amateur listener, a slight disdain for the overparticularized experience of music and for the very sense of hearing itself, which stands as impediment to the work of poetry and philosophy.

The material conditions that help incubate the anxiety about listening are complex. It is possible to discern in the 'hard' distribution networks around 1800 an intensification of productive specialization that, to use the *laissez faire* jargon, 'rationalizes' provision of cultural products. Gramit recognizes in discourses on music in this period an anxiety about the quality of music-making in smaller centres now that little monarchy's ability (and desire?) to patronize public music making wanes. This suggests also a tendency to conceive of urban centres as more rigidly classifiable according to their function in an emergent *Kulturnation*, more hierarchized than in the complexities of the Old Reich before Napoleon. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, attention to population distribution, publishing indices of book publishers' outputs and sales, music production and the number of personnel involved in the music publishing industry, helps articulate a striking correlation between the discourse network and the 'hard' distribution network.[100] In all these indicators, we discern a tendency to expand the differential between intensively productive centres and centres that only service local communities, underlining the tendency to limit the number of specialist productive centres but to expand cultural production rapidly from 1780 to 1820. In this we also recognize a general 'distancing' of cultural production from its consumption and in that distancing is born the new 'aura' of the commodity as we understand it today.

Our understanding of the anxieties about the *Lesewut* and its parallel *Hörwut* is deepened by an awareness also of the rationalization of centres of production and the consequent preparation for the *Kulturnation* which that rationalization no doubt sanctions. The territorialization of bourgeois culture is accomplished very quickly by recourse to an array of technologies that work across a wide range of fields: poetry and philosophy, professionalization, rationalization of cultural distribution, and distancing of production from consumption. The poetic–philosophical disquiet at listening, quite short-lived but intense, is an anxious response to the pressing challenges of bourgeois territorialization and in it we

[99] Schön, *Verlust*.

[100] Biddle, 'Autonomy', 39–73.

encounter a significant counter-example to the commonplace characterization that insists on romanticism's pervasive and all-consuming love affair with music. It seems that there were some at least for whom music represented a *distracting* pleasure, and listening to it occasioned the disciplinary voice of the universalizing author. Like the character Walt who, listening to his brother Vult playing the flute in Jean Paul's *Flegeljahre* (1795–1803),[101] did not notice that, whilst playing, his brother was also leaving, the fixated listener does not map onto the exemplary personality of Elias's bourgeois territorialization but stands for a distracted, dreamy passivity, in stark contrast to the steadfast and publicly sanctioned *Bildung* of the cultivated bourgeois.[102]

[101] *Jean Pauls Werke*, ed. by Eduard Berend (Berlin: Propyläen, 1923), IV, 927.

[102] Rummenhöller suggests that, 'if Hegel speaks of music as a romantic art because of its "subjective inwardness", then the "disappearing" of the flautist Vult is to be understood as "sublated" ["aufgehoben"] in the Hegelian sense'. Clearly, as we have seen, Hegel would not have figured the disappearance in this way, but Rummenhöller is right to recognize in this fixated moment a figuration of listening as incomplete: 'immersing himself in the music, Walt, left behind, and anyway the more earthly of the two, can only listen after him'. Rummenhöller, 'Hören', 178.

Chapter 2
The Horror of the Real: Adolf Bernhard Marx's Beethoven at the First *Gründerzeit*

> *The gap that separates beauty from ugliness is thus the very gap that separates reality from the Real: what constitutes reality is the minimum of idealization the subject needs in order to be able to sustain the horror of the Real.*[1]
>
> (Slavoj Žižek, 1997)

> *A new world view is settling itself into the minds of men. It goes about like a virus. Every young mind of the generation now living is affected by it. … Only this much is certain: the old has become obsolete and the new presses powerfully forward, as if mankind were pregnant with a new humanity.*[2]
>
> (Karl Fortlage, 1856)

> *[this] is the struggle of the spiritual against the material, of free understanding against dogma, of irrepressible progress against standstill and stagnation. This conflict is being fought on all sides and in all forms, in politics as in theology, in the sciences and arts as in the foundation of all culture [Bildung], the pedagogical and educational system. Everywhere it is a matter of the spirit becoming free.*[3]
>
> (A. B. Marx, 1841)

Introduction: Thinking the 'Modern' Personality

The horror of the Real, viral contagion, the struggle against the material: what connects Jacques Lacan (or, rather, Žižek's paraphrase of Lacan), Karl Fortlage and Adolf Bernhard Marx is an epistemological structure, a highly generalized symptom of a much longer and older European disenchantment with modernity, with the world as it appears to be presented in all its dispersed empirical complexity. For Lacan it is this very chaotic-empirical modernity itself, bringing in its wake a great 'social psychosis', that puts man at odds with himself, and

[1] Slavoj Žižek, *Plague of Fantasies* (London: Verso, 1997), 66. Žižek paraphrases Lacan from the *Seminar*, Book II, *The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis*, ed. by Jacques-Alain Miller (New York: Norton, 1991), especially 97–98.

[2] Quoted in Frederick Gregory, *Scientific Materialism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Dordrecht: Riedel, 1977), 10.

[3] Adolf Berhard Marx, *Die alte Musiklehre im Streit mit unserer Zeit* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1841), vi. My translation.

which traps him in a series of 'derealisations of others'[4] in the name of a willed cohesion of the self, in the name of *ego*. And that 'ego', the prosaic figure or 'object' that Lacan identified as having a 'paranoiac structure',[5] is inextricably linked to masculinity. At least, that is how the conversation on male subjectivity seems to proceed informally: men are selfish, they cannot nurture, they feel only in two dimensions, they are aggressive and, worst of all, *they are slaves to their ego*. Of all Freud's terms, with the possible exception of the unconscious, the ego is *the* term that has retained a certain, if somewhat problematic, quotidian currency. Why is it, then, that 'ego' has persisted so stubbornly in everyday discourse? The Freudian and the quotidian elucidation of the ego are, in fact, radically at odds with each other: Freud holds that the ego is a structurally necessary *compromise* that holds us together and presents us back to ourselves as a coherent self-image, a self-sustaining unit of thought, being and feeling. For most since Freud, however, ego has become resolutely attached to the *excesses* of the male personality, to male cruelty, to a certain male psychosis; it is the cause of man's aggression, the site of his downfall. For once, it seems, Lacan is closer (if only very slightly) to the quotidian than Freud, and it is in his 'critical' response to American ego psychology (a peculiarly North American reading of late Freud), that Lacan develops a strikingly historicizing account of the ego, delivering to it an 'era' of its very own, giving the ego a historical shape, a specificity and particularity and, perhaps most importantly, thereby construing it as *contingent*.[6] We might therefore ask how such an 'era' (its shape, its dynamics) impacts on thinking about music.

If psychoanalysis is a historically locatable technology of the subject, then thinking about the 'ego's era' and musical thought together ought to offer ways of understanding how subjectivities are constructed, negotiated and projected within texts about music, and how such projections both differ from and are continuous with other discipline-specific textual conventions. This historicizing ego should tell us something about changing imaginations of the male personality in the Austro-German nineteenth century precisely because it was in that century, within that cultural field, that the notion of ego was first thought. It was also in that century that the romantic symbolic of the male composer was elaborated around the reception of Beethoven. In other words, the thinking of the ego and the discursive construction of the figure of the male composer have a certain historical reciprocity. Since it was with Beethoven that the symbolic of the male composer as we understand (and critique) it today was first constructed, there appears to be good reason for thinking the mid-nineteenth-century reception of Beethoven and the epistemological incubation of the ego as

[4] Jacques Lacan, 'Aggresivity in psychoanalysis', *Écrits: A Selection* (London: Routledge, [1948] 1989), 9–32: 31–32.

[5] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock Publications, 1977), 20.

[6] Theresa Brennan, *History after Lacan* (London: Routledge, 1993). See especially 26–75.

in some sense symptomatic of a coherent cultural–historical moment, identified by William Weber as the moment at which so-called classical music 'achieves hegemony'.[7] Perhaps, then, it is precisely in the shift of public taste after the 1848 revolutions – from the mixed social status of the audiences of miscellany concerts to stricter, more socially regimented and specialized concert types – that we can glean something of the profound changes at work in the social fabric of public bourgeois culture and constructions of the bourgeois public masculine personality.

The terms by which listening subjects constitute themselves undergo a transformation after 1848: the second half of the nineteenth century is a moment at which new structural metaphors of surface and depth emerge. In the emergence of clinical psychology (Jean Martin Charcot's residency at the Salpêtrière, for example, begins in 1862), scientific materialism, psychoanalysis, dialectical materialism and, eventually, the rise of professional (and scholarly) music criticism, we detect symptoms of a turn to the interior, a fascination with what can be uncloaked through the actions of systematic (which is to say *professionalized*) analysis. Marx and Engels uncover the work of ideology and the mystification of the relations of production whilst plant biology concerns itself with cellular ecology (Charles Spencer's major improvements to the microscope in the late 1840s, for example, transformed the clarity and detail of magnified images) and some forms of music criticism and pedagogy turn ever more to the notion of 'submerged' or hidden form in analytical detail (the rise of notions such as *Harmonik*, *Gramatik der Musik* and *Logik*, for example, are all symptoms of a desire to grasp a 'whole', which could account for, selectively make place for, the surface minutiae of the composition).[8]

At this moment in the ego's era, then, we encounter new regimens, disciplines and technologies of the subject. For Lacan, the progress of the ego in its 'era' is to be grasped precisely as this kind of 'technology' or regimen. In 1953 in the so-called 'Rome report', 'The function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis', Lacan makes a suggestive reference to the ego as having some 'era' of its own:

[7] Weber describes this process as a 'fragmentation into separate cultural spheres and a redefinition of authority and taste'. William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Music Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 235.

[8] See Dahlhaus: 'The necessity of proceeding selectively, of not getting bogged down in the invisible, can be grasped … as offering the promise of the "whole" – in which the life of the work consists.' Carl Dahlhaus *Geschichte der Musiktheorie*: *Die Musiktheorie im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989), 223, my translation.

> The *moi*, the ego, of modern man, as I have indicated elsewhere, has taken on its form in the dialectical impasse of the *belle âme* who does not recognize his very own *raison d'être* in the disorder that he denounces in the world.[9]

Belle âme refers to the notion posited by Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that the subject is formed in the dialectical relationship of the 'law of the heart' and the 'frenzy of self-conceit' ['Das Gesetz des Herzens und der Wahnsinn des Eigendünkels'].[10] This is the 'social psychosis'[11] that Lacan diagnoses in 'modern man', and his understanding of this passage from Hegel undoubtedly comes from his encounter with Alexander Kojève's reading of it in his lectures on Hegel from the 1930s.[12] It is, for Lacan, the historically locatable alienation of man from himself that characterizes this era of the ego. Its era stretches back at least to the seventeenth century when, according to Lacan, the social psychosis emerged, as evidenced in, for example, 'Pascal's warning, at the dawn of the historical era of the ego, echoing in these terms: "Les hommes sont si nécessairement fous, que ce serait être fou par un autre tout de folie, de n'être pas fou".'[13] Stretching across four centuries, the ego's era is coterminous with what we have come to call the 'modern' era, the *longue durée* of the ego's passage. For our purposes, what is interesting about Lacan's 'critique of the ego' is its reliance on the notion that that ego is supported by a foundational fantasy in which man must hold woman in the place of the subaltern, as his lesser other, limit her to a 'psychical fantasy' in order that his being can be constituted, and she can be 'derealized'. The terms of this constitution are highly complex, and the extent to which it might be said to be a 'naturalisation' of the subordination of the feminine difficult to determine.[14] For me, the most useful way to read Lacan here is as showing us a way of bringing

[9] Jacques Lacan, 'The function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis', *Écrits: A Selection* (London: Routledge, [1953] 1989), 33–125: 77.

[10] G. W. F. Hegel, *System der Wissenschaft. Erster Teil, die Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Bamberg und Würzburg 1807).

[11] Jacques Lacan, 'On a question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis', *Écrits: A Selection* (London: Routledge, [1955–1956] 1989), 198–249: 239.

[12] Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the* Phenomenology of Spirit (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, [1933] 1969).

[13] Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, ed. by Léon Brunschvicq (Paris: Hachette, [1670] 1904), 414. 'Men are not so necessarily mad that it would be being mad by another madness *not* to be mad.' Trans. by Alan Sheridan, in Lacan, *Écrits* (1977), 78.

[14] For obvious reasons, the terms of this argument have generated much debate, especially amongst feminists. They are divided in their assessment of Lacan's famous declaration that 'Woman does not exist' as either a symptom of his deep-lying misogyny or as a powerful diagnosis of the predicament of the feminine in the symbolic order. Perhaps the most persuasive critique of Lacan is to be found in Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990). It is also true to say that Butler does not do away wholly with the Lacanian economy and much of her theory of performativity is Lacanian in origin. For the moment, suffice it to say that many feminists

about a fundamental problematization of the ego and its social psychosis: since the ego's era is historically *limited*, as Brennan has argued from a resolutely feminist perspective, the machineries of (masculine, misogynist) hegemony it has put in place can thus become susceptible to a strategic destabilization – what is historical, to paraphrase Marx and Engels, will inevitably melt into air.[15]

For Lacan (and Freud) the ego is a trickster. Lacan's views in 1954, a year after the Rome Report, were quite clear, especially with regard to the outcome of analysis:

> Freud's formula – where id was, ego must be – is usually understood in line with crass spatialisation, and the analytic reconquest of the id is in the end reduced to the action of a mirage. The *ego* sees itself in a self which is simply a final alienation of itself, just better finished than all those it has known up to then. … The process of an analysis does not consist in the enlarging of the field of the *ego*, it is not the reconquest by the *ego* of its margin of the unknown, rather it is a genuine inversion, a displacement, like a minuet executed by the *ego* and the *id*.[16]

The ego represents a technology of the self here in that it is 'better finished than all [other technologies of the self] it has known up to then'. Lacan is interested in demonstrating both the contingency of the ego and its efficiency. This double reading is quite striking in that it holds the key to a radicalization of theories of the subject: the ego's efficiency is precisely what points to its constructedness – its projection of neatness, of closure, containment is precisely that which attests to its compromised nature. The ego is thus only one of many 'delusions' or technologies that the self has learnt to spin to itself and, to place it in an even more overtly historicist frame, the ego is an historically specific self-ideal that has supplanted

have used Lacan to radical ends and my approach here is elaborated along those lines, putting to one side the question of Lacan's complex theory of female sexuality.

[15] The context for this oft-quoted phrase makes it clear that a theory of modernity is at the heart of Marx and Engel's critique of capitalism: 'The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real condition of life and his relations with his kind.' Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Penguin, 2002), 70.

[16] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: Book 1: Freud's Papers on Technique 1953–4* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 232.

other historically specific self-ideals and *which will, in turn, itself be supplanted*. The goal of analysis, therefore, is not to 'recuperate' or 'strengthen' the ego, but to transform the relationship between the id and the ego such that they can both be critically recast, grasped as strategic constructs. What Lacan is clearly trying to demonstrate here is that the ego functions as an agency of the *historical* process in which man becomes ever more alien to himself and in which, to read along Brennan's analytical trajectory, woman is held at bay, held responsible for that alienation, held in the interminable 'minuet' as the other.

What we are talking about here is the historicity of a certain *gap*, a space between what one imagines to be true about oneself and the unbearably scattered empirical field that cannot be held together, between Hegel's 'law of the heart' and the 'frenzy of self-conceit': into this gap rushes ego, to bring stability, to collect together under the name of 'self' what is dispersed, irreconcilable. As a historically limited (and limitable) fantasy structure, the ego enables the personality of its era to hold itself together not as an empty space or structure (in other words, the ego is experienced not primarily as a structural phenomenon), but as the *congealing of specific and contingent cultural materials into a lump of stuff*: ego is thus not a territory, but a kind of abundance, a densely packed knot of images, regimens, rituals and desires. As we shall see, these materials make themselves felt in Austro-German nineteenth-century discourses about men as, among other things, a procession of avatars – heroes, saints, villains and scoundrels, all creatures of the moral landscape of public masculinity, all tied into the internal narrative that disciplines gender designations well into the twentieth century.

Mind the Gap: Marx's Beethoven

Adolf Bernhard's 1859 two-volume monograph on Beethoven, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Leben und Schaffen*,[17] is epistemologically anxious: it is a study in the nostalgic recuperation of a heroic masculinity in the face of the decline of Idealism and the rise of scientific materialism. Beethoven stands in the monograph as a reproach. If, as we have suggested above, the ego papers over epistemological and ideological gaps, rushes to fill them, then Marx is an exemplary sufferer of that 'psychosis':

> In the "emancipated" man of modern society, this splitting reveals, right down to the depths of his being, a neurosis of self-punishment, with the hysterico-hypochondriac symptoms of its functional inhibitions, with the psychasthenic

[17] Adolf Bernhard Marx, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Leben und Schaffen* (Berlin: Otto Jahnke, 1859).

> forms of its derealizations of others and of the world, with its social consequences in failure and crime.[18]

The ego's function, as we have also seen, is to maintain the *fantasy* of a containment (by 'derealising' others) and that containment is paid for dearly in a 'neurosis of self-punishment' – symptomized in alienation, hypochondria, hysteria and criminality. In the atomization of individuals, men in particular are thrown into a dizzying moral firmament where their choices are limited and their burden is to labour under the always already unethical character of public discourse: where official medical discourse had consistently sought to territorialize hypochondria, hysteria and other 'psychosthenic' maladies to the feminine, Lacan insists on its resolute attachment to both men *and* women, as symptoms of the modern, of the ego, but as attached even more resolutely to the operations of the symbolic order in which the law of the father is enshrined. Masculinity is for Lacan that cultural arena in which the social psychosis of ego is writ large, but it is not its privileged site, not the 'engine' of that operation, as it were.

In this Lacanian context, it is interesting that, in writings on music from the middle of the nineteenth century, and in Adolf Bernhard Marx's work in particular, discursive 'gaps' or discontinuities in public discourse occasion an anxiety about personality formation. Male citizens seem to become ever more susceptible to the ravages of psychosthenia, and vigilance is therefore the watchword of the new moral order in which the gap between the whole and the dispersed widens continuously and anxieties about an inexorable slippage into empirical chaos are ever more widespread. It seems suddenly as if gaps are everywhere. It is what might be termed the *heroic tone* in public discourse, that discursive composure that marks the rustle of the most anxious ideology (marked in the studiedly assured and self-consciously 'confident' wielding of public discourse) that is one of the clearest symptoms of this work because the hero becomes ever more irredeemably entwined with notions of alienation, distance and isolation whilst simultaneously being asked to hold everything together. Heroes, it would seem, are ever more routinely characterized as ambivalent, complex and morally ambiguous.[19]

Scott Burnham has attempted to show how (A. B.) Marx was able to draw on the Beethovenian 'heroic style' as a resource in constructing a certain moral 'heroic' personality.[20] Burnham is undoubtedly right to draw attention to the

[18] Lacan, 'Aggresivity in psychoanalysis', 31–32. It is worth remarking here that its grounding in historically specific instances is fundamentally at odds with the ubiquitous critique of psychoanalysis as counter-historical.

[19] Georg Buchner's *Lenz* (1835) is an early example of this kind of flawed and ambiguous hero figure.

[20] 'Like the great myths, the Beethovenian heroic-style sonata form assumes a place as one of Western culture's master plots … The attachment of this particular musical-formal procedure to an ethical position severely alters the way in which other forms are viewed. As a particularly telling example of this, remember the way in which the Beethovenian

centrality of the Beethoven style in Marx's moral–pedagogical agenda. Indeed, more recent attempts to defend classical music against its perceived (and demonstrable) decline, recently pilloried by Richard Taruskin for their 'utopian delusions',[21] are striking for their fidelity to precisely this kind of moment in Marx's hagiography. One is struck here by the parallels, in particular, between Julian Johnson's attempt to elaborate the worth of classical music from an aesthetic–historical (and moral) perspective and the discourse about moral personality that attaches to the romantic reception of Beethoven.[22] Such attempts were, and remain, part and parcel of the turn in music criticism in the early part of the nineteenth century to self-validating forms of discourse,[23] a process intensified after the 1848 revolutions in the 'great transformation of musical taste'.[24] The moral personality of the male composer figure looms consistently large as a cultural resource in managing attempts at establishing a moral–aesthetic framework for the validation of classical music in the second half of

sonata form acts as the crowning form in A. B. Marx's *Formenlehre*: it is the motivating *telos* of his derivation of all other available forms … Marx's pedagogical program enlists Beethoven's music (and thus music in general) in the all-important agenda of *Bildung*, a process concerned primarily with the aesthetic and ethical development of self.' Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 156.

[21] Richard Taruskin, 'The Musical Mystique: Defending classical music against its devotees', *The New Republic* (22 October 2007), http://www.tnr.com/ (accessed 3 November 2007). Taruskin's criticism is aimed at Lawrence Kramer's *Why Classical Music Still Matters* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2007), Julian Johnson's, *Who Needs Classical Music? Cultural Choice and Musical Values* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) and Joshua Fineburg's *Classical Music why Bother? Hearing the World of Contemporary Culture Through a Composer's Ears* (London: CRC Press, 2006).

[22] I was particularly struck by the following passage on the last page of the book: 'The value of music-as-art lies in a difficult balancing act between the particularity of its materials and the abstract idea that it projects through their patterning and reworking. Its goal is to treat the materials in such a way that they do not lose their particularity, while at the same time, through their configuration, point beyond their particularity … This is more than metaphysical nonsense: it is a squaring of the circle we claim as fundamentally human. We understand ourselves as particular, physical beings, but we also value the ways we exceed the physical, the ways our capacity for thought, feeling, and imagination seem to transcend our bodily experience.' Johnson, *Classical Music*, 130. One wonders why it is that only classical music is afforded precisely this function here. It is also interesting that, elsewhere (p. 38), Johnson blames the overemphasis on Beethoven-reception for the intense passivization of listeners in the face of complex music-as-art. Clearly, then, the debate about classical music and its values is inextricably linked to the figure of Beethoven, however much we try to escape it (Johnson refers to the romantic reception of Beethoven as a 'caricature', p. 38).

[23] See David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770–1848* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2002).

[24] Weber, *Transformation*.

the nineteenth century. Marx belongs, then, to a larger historical trend in Austro-German music criticism to seek to naturalize what were essentially parochial (and class-specific) claims to the higher moral authority of classical music.

There is also something else at work in Marx's fidelity to the heroic style of Beethoven, a certain haunting of the 1859 monograph by the fleshy figure of Beethoven himself, as if the material stuff of the composer were in some sense still uncannily animated, or undead. Burnham's delicately drawn historiography certainly points to some of the ways in which Beethoven's style comes to be held at the level of a *mentalité*, a collective and anonymous discursive modality ('Marx treats Beethoven', so Burnham would have us believe, 'as a Hegelian *telos*: only from the vantage point of the end of history can History begin'[25]); yet what is missing in his characterization, it seems to me, is precisely the prodigious undead materiality of the Beethoven figure itself, as avatar of a certain moment in the development of what Bourdieu has termed the modern habitus, the enacting of culture onto the body[26] – this is a key moment in the sealing of the modern personality into that habitus when the ego is brought into play as a *body-sense*, functioning as a sensory field (the 'sensorium') that comes to occupy the same space occupied by the body. In this sense, the ego and the habitus are mutually implicated agents in this moment of the history of Western bourgeois masculinity and Marx is faced with a structural problem: how to evoke the heroic style (in which he dreams still of an endlessly expanding cultural field) whilst at the same time being haunted by an undead fleshy Beethoven (bodily, physically limited, material)? Indeed, Marx seems to grasp as much in his narrative of Beethoven's 'breaking out' into the world, as a newly formed and powerful fleshy agent in it:

> His build had become stocky, though not tall, thick set, full of vitality, a picture of strength; at that point illness did not yet seem to be an issue. His head was covered in bushy dark hair, that lay unkempt, more mane-like than curly; his forehead was broader and protruded all the more for being mounted above the darkness of his cagily receding eyes; his nose was strong and had developed a broadness rather than protruding, in German profile rather than the Roman profile of most artists' noses. His mouth was well formed.[27]

[25] Burnham, *Hero*, 156.

[26] See Pierre Bourdieu, *La domination masculine* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1998); trans. Richard Nice as *Masculine Domination* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).

[27] 'Sein Körperbau war gedrungen, nicht groß, starkknochig, voll Rüstigkeit, ein Bild der Kraft; von Krankheit scheint damals noch nicht die Rede zu sein. Sein Haupt hatte sich mit dunkelm Haargebüsch bedeckt, das ungeordnet, mehr mähnenartig als lockig umherlag, die Stirn war breiter und vordringender über den dunkeln Augen gelagert, die nun schon tiefer und verschlossener zurücktraten, die Nase war kräftig mehr in die Breite entwickelt, also vordringend, von deutschem, nicht römischen Profilschnitt, wie die meisten Künstlernasen. Der Mund war wohlgebildet.' Marx, *Beethoven*, volume 1, 33. My translation.

Marx contrasted this description of the 25-year-old Beethoven with the famous silhouette of Beethoven at 16 included in the Wegeler-Ries *Biographical Notes*.[28] Marx's description of the younger Beethoven from that silhouette emphasizes his 'open profile' with an 'upturned nose' and a light and 'still undeveloped' forehead.[29] This is an exercise in body-*Bildung*,[30] education through physical development, an enacting of the narrative of *Bildung* onto the habitus, an enacting of a *regimen*. A peculiarly Austro-German conception of personal development (although it finds many analogues in other cultures), *Bildung*, as we saw in Chapter 1, has been characterized by Norbert Elias as 'the inner enrichment, the *intellectual formation of the individual*, primarily through the medium of books, in the personality.'[31] There is thus a striking complexity in this moment's continued fidelity to *Bildung* in that, until the mid-nineteenth century at least, it was constituted solely in the intellectual and moral development of the personality. The pointed contrast between the two figures (the silhouette of Beethoven at 16 and Marx's filled-out Beethoven figure at 25) is both a material and an epistemological one, as between two technologies of representation: the earlier figure is referenced in relief, the silhouette tracing the outer markers of Beethoven's personality; the later figure is imagined as an image available to the close scrutiny of the observer, such that the composer's eyes give up their meanings under the protruding forehead, and the mouth, well-formed, seems to work as a sign of health; there is, as Marx stresses, no sign of Beethoven's coming illness here. This second image, at least, is *fully legible*, its materiality speaks.

The technologies of nineteenth-century seeing, as Jonathan Crary has shown, were already under radical transformation by the late 1850s. Gustav Fechner's *Elemente der Psychophysik*,[32] published one year after Marx's *Beethoven* monograph, had gone some way to, as Crary puts it, '[formalise] perception' and

[28] Marx does not give the full reference. Probably created in 1786 by Joseph Neesen, the original ink silhouette is no longer extant. Wegeler used a lithographic reproduction for the frontispiece of his biography of Beethoven in 1838. Franz Gerhard Wegeler and Ludwig Ries, *Biographische Notizen über Ludwig van Beethoven* (Coblenz: K. Bädeker, 1838).

[29] 'Das Profil ist offen, die Stirn gut aber noch gemäßigt in ihrer Entwickelung, die Augen scheinen vordringend, der Mund scheint, wie bei heißen Gemüthern öfters, leicht geöffnet, die Nase, das ganze Antlitz emporgerichtet.' Marx, *Beethoven*, volume 1, 33.

[30] Suzanne R. Kirschner has characterized this as a 'secularized variant' of Christian mythical story. Suzanne R. Kirschner, *The Religious and Romantic Origins of Psychoanalysis: Individuation and Integration in Post-Freudian Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 10.

[31] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process, Vol. I. The History of Manners* (Oxford: Blackwell, [1939] 1969), 27. Emphasis added.

[32] Gustav Theodor Fechner, *Elemente der Psychophysik*, 2 volumes (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1860).

'render the specific contents of vision irrelevant'.[33] Marx's manner of 'seeing' here is, to some extent, in line with this coming formalization. Despite its heady romantic tone and its commitment to 'specific content' in Beethoven's forehead, in the way in which it hides the eyes, in the well-formed mouth, and the specifications of the artist's 'German' nose,[34] Marx's description promotes a manner of seeing that draws on the logic of the modernization of optics that Fechner was very shortly to diagnose: the 'human sensorium' here finds a parallel in the intensification of Beethoven's subject-status, not as *Subjekt*, but as *Versuchsperson*, as one *subjected to* intense scrutiny.[35] There is thus a certain intensification of the look accompanied, paradoxically, by its disengagement; Marx's 'eye' retreats from the scene of looking and the figure of Beethoven dominates, breaking into the narrative with a rude muscularity.[36] Beethoven's physicality dominates, and yet that physicality marks Beethoven's susceptibility to scrutiny, as one being-looked-at, his objectification.[37] Hence, the ambiguity so clear at the heart of Fechner's formalization of perception is here writ large: both the material specificity of Beethoven the man and a formalized act of looking attend this moment in equal measure.

The two figurations of Beethoven at 16 and 25 also tell us something about the specifics of Marx's engagement of the *Bildung*-concept: the story of Beethoven's stepping out, 'into the world' ['in die Welt'] as Marx calls this second chapter of his monograph, is told through recourse to a conception of Beethoven's personality

[33] Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999), 147. Crary understands Fechner's work as a symptom of an epistemological shift towards the fully fledged modern personality: 'Fechner's rationalization of sensation not only led to the development of specific technologies of behaviour and attentiveness; it was also a sign of the reshaping of an entire social field and the position of a human sensorium within it', 149.

[34] Haydn apparently called his pupil Beethoven 'Großmogul'. See Marx, *Beethoven*, volume 1, 35.

[35] The full implication of this intensification is dealt with in the next chapter.

[36] Although it is unclear which image of Beethoven Marx has in mind, it might be one of the 1804 and 1805 Mähler pictures, now in the Historisches Museum in Vienna or, perhaps the 1803 miniature on ivory by Christian Horneman, now in the Beethovenhaus collection; certainly, both pictures fit the mane-like description although the dates are somewhat problematic.

[37] I am reminded here of that fascinating passage from Lacan's Book XI of the *Seminar* in which he discusses Sartre's encounter with the gaze in *L'Être et le Néant*: 'If you turn to Sartre's own text, you will see that, far from speaking of the emergence of this gaze as of something that concerns the organ of sight, he refers to the sound of rustling leaves, suddenly heard while out hunting, to a footstep heard in a corridor. And when are these sounds heard? At the moment when he has presented himself in the action of looking through a keyhole. A gaze surprises him in the function of voyeur, disturbs him, overwhelms him and reduces him to a feeling of shame.' Jacques Lacan, *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (London: Penguin [1973] 1994), 84.

development as proceeding along a predetermined heroic trajectory. Indeed, throughout this section, Marx draws prodigiously on the well-trodden clichés of Beethoven's complex and difficult character and strains to tie these traits and his physical attributes into the musical works themselves as if all this should add up to a self-consistent narrative:

> This contradiction of an apparent closedness combined with an openness of the mind to all true sentiments and inclinations is a predominant element of Beethoven's character [that remained] from his boyhood, a sign of the deeply invested powerful and serious nature at work within him, which should be evident from the first works onwards.[38]

Suzanne R. Kirschner has termed this tendency to oscillate between the local–personal and the longer-term *conjoncture* of the *Lebenslauf* or life trajectory the 'romantic spiral', drawing explicitly on older German narrative traditions that outline man's estrangement from, and higher reintegration back into, nature.[39] In this sense, as Kirschner seems to suggest implicitly, the *Bildung* concept is a secularization of the narrative of the fall from grace, rounded off with a certain return to grace or reintegration, a secular redemption. That secular narrative, in its most hegemonic form, calls into being fantasy figures, well known in the German-language *Bildungsroman* from the late eighteenth century onwards, whose progress is made to stand in for the progress of man at his most general towards that redemption.

Yet, although Marx goes some way to constructing a case for secular canonization along these lines, what is striking about this fidelity to *Bildung* is the extent to which, at certain moments in the narrative, the narrative flow is interrupted by a pleasuring in the physical attributes of Beethoven, or a dallying at lengthy descriptions of his complex personality:

> And so he took up his public career, good, open, devoted, striving, full of pride, *fully steeped in that which lived within him*. He could be cheerful to the point of mischief, he had wit, satire and sarcasm at his disposal; yet the gravity of his high calling dwelt at the deepest level, the fullness of which even he could not survey except from afar, as the advance in his works shows incontrovertibly.[40]

[38] 'Dieser Gegensatz von Verschlossenheit nach außen hin im Verein mit Offenheit des Gemüths für alle wahrhaften Empfindungen und Neigungen ist von den Knabenjahren her ein hervorstechender Zug in Beethovens Karakter, ein Zeichen seiner tief angelegten, mächtig und ernstlich in sich arbeitenden Natur, die sich von den ersten Werken an bewähren sollte.' Marx, *Beethoven*, volume 1, 35.

[39] Kirschner, *Origins*, 10.

[40] 'So trat er seine öffentliche Laufbahn an, gut, offen, anhänglich, strebend, voll Selbstgefühl, *ganz durchdrungen von dem, was in ihm lebte*. Er konnte heiter sein bis zum Muthwillen, ihm stand Witz, Satyre, Sarkasmus zu Gebot; aber im teifsten Grunde lebte der

This passage, like many others from the monograph, reads like a rather cumbersome pastiche of the sentimental *Bildungsroman* but nonetheless points to a specificity in Marx's writing that is easy to miss: where other nineteenth-century writers before Marx might have attempted here to discipline the personality and body of Beethoven and bring them into an explicit relation to his personality and his work, Marx's pleasuring in the Beethoven personality makes that integration difficult and, perhaps, even undesirable. At this point, moreover, Marx indulges in a striking textual excess in the extensive footnote to this passage (taking up more than a whole page), which seems to be trying to work through an anxiety about that reintegration, and it devotes much space to working through the various style periodization narratives (especially those outlined by Fétis and Oulibicheff). For Marx, it would seem, the relationship between musical work and the empirical author-figure is an extremely complex one and it is in this kind of passage, one might say, that Marx's modernity can be located: the apparently casual causality of the main text passage quoted above – the 'advance' ['Fortschritt'] of his work comes almost as an afterthought, in a subordinate clause, which struggles to tie the fulsome pleasuring in Beethoven's personality into the work-narrative – reads rather like an overcompensation and the footnote posits the intensity of the 'Fortschritt' or 'advance' in Beethoven's style as accounting *in itself* for the desire of biographers and other commentators to ascribe to Beethoven's works the by then well-established periodization. In other words, the musical materials are given primary agency:

> This advance makes itself felt … so meaningfully (more than for any other composer), that it has led biographers and commentators to distinguish between three periods – [they are] distinguished, that is, by their character and not just by time periods, as Schindler's useful scheme has shown, from birth to 1800, from then to October 1813 and from then to his death in 1827 – or manners or styles.[41]

It is the *excess* or *impudence* of the musical 'advance' itself (the singular here is rather strange and denotes, perhaps, Marx's desire to abstract or generalize out from the specifics) that occasions the commentators' periodizing zeal. Marx is forced in this unwieldy moment to stitch together a number of different sets

Ernst seines hohen Berufs, dessen ganze Fülle er selbst noch weit entfernt sein mußte zu überschauen, wie der Fortschritt in seinen Werken unwidersprechlich zeigt.' Ibid., volume 1, 33–34. My emphasis.

[41] 'Dieser Fortschritt tritt bei Beethoven (mehr, wie bei irgend einem andern Tonküstler) so bedeutend hervor, daß er Biographen und Beurtheiler verleitet hat, drei Perioden – und zwar karakteristisch uterschiedene, nicht blos Zeitabschnitte, wie sie Schindler zu bessere Uebersicht macht, von der Geburt bis 1800, von da bis Oktober 1813, von da bis zum Tode 1827, – oder Manieren, oder Style zu unterscheiden.' Ibid., footnote, volume 1, 34. In order to make the meanings a little clearer here, I have changed the order somewhat in my translation.

of materials: from Beethoven's physical appearance (as imagined in the two 'images') to his personality ('good, open, devoted, striving …'), to his works (their 'advance') – body–personality–work. Each connection relies on what I have termed elsewhere a 'homological chain', the hitching together of different cultural forms by stressing the (putative) similarities of each form's structural proclivity to the next form in the chain.[42] Implicit in this chaining is the notion that different cultural forms carry messages from one medium to another, that these messages, however mediated, can be traced and gleaned if the harvester of its meanings has himself (the gendering here is deliberate) been through an adequate regime of *Bildung*.

The *Bildung* concept, up until the late nineteenth century, was resolutely attached to hegemonic constructions of public masculinity, and its explicit misogyny (men seek *Bildung* and thereby understand art, where women merely toy with, and consume, art) is evident not just in that exclusion of women from that narrative but also in the patrilineal logic of the homological chain itself: the exemplary male personality (of, for example, a Beethoven) hovers behind the work like a great puppet master, his body and his personality are garnered as the source of (and a resource for) the work. This desire to tie cultural forms into a chain like this has a long history and Marx's attempt here is just one instance of it, but what makes this instance particularly interesting is the way in which it draws on a logic of connection that is palpably under pressure: Marx, as we have seen, has to work quite hard to make this chaining – the aporias show up here everywhere.

Since the homological chain, although a key structural process in the *Beethoven* monograph, is under threat, the operative effectiveness of *Bildung* epistemology itself is also under threat. Marx's imagination of Beethoven's agency in the world is struggling to hold itself together. Burnham, as we have already noted, has attempted to show that the Beethoven style 'itself' lies at the heart of Marx's Beethoven fantasy, that the fantasy rests first and foremost on his encounter with those materials. Yet the historical specificity of Marx's writing on music is as much locatable in its trueness to a radicalized gender politics (a certain politicization of the male body and personality), as it is to an investment in a view of musical materials as doing cultural/historical work. Indeed, there is in the 1859 monograph a particular texture or grain to the Beethoven figure that music-theoretical readings of Marx often miss and which points to the historicity of this conception of Beethoven as man and personality as well as artist. This, I want to suggest in this chapter, is the problem that Marx tries to work through in the Beethoven monograph: how might it be possible to make sense of the relationship between idealizing figurations of poetic agency and the logic of industrial production, materials, things, *Stoff*? How can *Bildung* survive in this new order?

[42] Ian Biddle, 'Of mice and dogs: Music, gender and sexuality at the long fin de siècle', in Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Mddleton (eds), *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2003), 215–226: 224–225.

Heroes, Heroes, Heroes

The oft noted 'inconsistencies' or logical gaps in Marx's work[43] are symptomatic of a *mentalité* situated between two worldviews: Marx's Beethoven monograph is both the product of the ubiquitous currency of German Idealism in mid-century Berlin and symptomatic of the crisis in that worldview occasioned by the rise in the popular taste for scientific materialism. The Beethoven monograph thus prefigures the pessimism of Marx's 1867 *Das Ideal und die Gegenwart*[44] in which the materialism of his present is pointedly juxtaposed with the Idealism of a 'golden age' in German art. The Beethoven monograph also elaborates and reworks the more orthodox (Old) Hegelian orientation of his 1841 *Die alte Musiklehre im Streit mit unserer Zeit*. Marx's monograph is shot through with discursive gaps and mismatches: the monograph's optimism and its 'heroising' Hegelian polemic of *Geist* and *Idee* is brought time and again into encounter with the counter-trope of *Stoff* ['material'], a covert materialism, that finds expression in the work's appeal to Beethoven's muscular, active, bawdy and demonstrative material masculinity.

The muscularity of Marx's Beethoven is also apparent in a structural and epistemological turn from an unearthly fantasy of Beethoven as a cultural conduit towards a Beethoven fantasy grounded in a new logic of *industry*: this is a Beethoven put to work, as it were, ('The life of the man is constituted in his deeds'[45]) as, first and foremost, *Musterarbeiter* (literally, 'worker of exemplars'):

> [Now] followed the Grand Trio pour Piano, Violon et Violoncelle, Op. 97, the great favourite of all trio-playing musicians, for them a true exemplary work [*Musterarbeit*], sparkling with air and pleasure, broad and homely, like the richest man's table.[46]

It is this pointedly material and domestic imagery and its attachment to the industrial body that constitutes what, specifically, in Marx is radical. Compare Marx's Beethoven, for example, with the Beethoven of E. T. A. Hoffmann's 1810 review of the Fifth Symphony. Hoffmann's earlier review is charged with an almost masochistic pleasure at the reviewer's surrender to the great Master's imagination. There is a beguiling linguistic and epistemological difference between this and Marx's bawdy hero that points to two quite different hagiographic logics. The

[43] Michael Spitzer, for example, recently characterized Marx's explanations of the key categories *Satz* and *Gang* as 'infuriatingly … inconsistent'. Michael Spitzer, *Metaphor and Musical Thought* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 289.

[44] Adolf Bernard Marx, *Das Ideal und die Gegenwart* (Jena: H. Costenoble, 1867).

[45] Marx, *Beethoven*, volume 1, 3. My translation.

[46] '[In gleicher, brausender Lebensfülle folgte] das Grand Trio pour Piano, violon et Violoncelle, Op. 97, der große Liebling aller Trio spielenden Musiker, ihnen schon als wahre Musterarbeit vor andern werth, funkelnd von Luft und Genuß, breit und behaglich, wie die Tafel des Reichsten.' Ibid., 208. My translation.

earlier author embraces, with almost fanatical commitment, the figuration of Beethoven as exemplar of an ideal mode of masculine creativity, whereas the later author, although nostalgic for that fantasy, is nonetheless haunted by a debilitating incongruity between empirical masculinity *von unten* and the ideal that Beethoven haunts us with *von oben*. The gap or mismatch between the two idealizations of Beethovenian masculinity can be understood, it seems to me, by thinking about the various symbolic economies that attend the two moments: the one, open (indeed fully acquiescent) to the universalized appeal of the Beethoven exemplar (in Kittler's 'discourse network', as we saw in Chapter 1, this exemplar might be said to work as a conduit of poetry, universal flow, channelled address); the other, constituted in the atavistic quest for a way to hold out against the new order (in Kittlerian terms, perhaps, to hold discourse in its decaying 'romantic' channels), is constituted within a discourse stalked by an anxiety that the ideal address of creative production might not be held in place or on target for much longer. Whereas the first springs from a moment at which all materials seem endlessly translatable, to channel Goethe once again through Kittler, the latter is at a crossroads, 'under siege', to use Sanna Pederson's characterization.[47] Crucial to the differentiation I seek to make here in these two moments are the different imaginations of the male composer figure and, more importantly, what each situation makes it possible to say about him: here are two radically different ways of making sense of public creative masculinity, two different cultural figurations of *heroes*, two different instances of ego-work.

As subjects at the twilight of the ego's era, we are often told that heroes are born in a futile but unavoidable imagining: heroes call forth a set of ideals that cover over the horrific inconsistency of being; heroes are the productive fictions that fill the gap between reality and what Lacan terms the 'Real', that which is left after the work of symbolization. Slavoj Žižek also makes this point in his elaboration of the later work of Lacan:

> The gap that separates beauty from ugliness is thus the very gap that separates reality from the Real: what constitutes reality is the minimum of idealization the subject needs in order to be able to sustain the horror of the Real.[48]

This gap between what, on the one hand, might be understood as our culturally constituted imagination of reality (as we imagine it from 'within' the Symbolic order) and, on the other, that which, by definition, refuses to be assimilated to our culturally specific imagination ('the Real'), is a gap or blindspot that exerts a dynamic force on the Symbolic, and does a certain amount of *work*: it is paradoxically this 'ground' on which ideology rests and which gives rise to a particular intensity in the imagining of ideals and heroes; it is a fantasy that

[47] Sanna Pederson, 'Romantic music under siege in 1848', in Ian Bent (ed.), *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 57–74.

[48] Žižek, *Plague*, 66.

persists *with purpose*. In Hoffmann, the gap between empirical and ideal subject is so radically suppressed as to almost disappear from view; it persists at the edges of the discursive texture of the writing as a sexualization of the relationship between the empirical author (Hoffmann) and the ideal author (Beethoven). Indeed, Hoffmann supplicates himself to the will of the Master in an explicit act of self-degradation:

> Beethoven's music unveils before us the realm of the immense and immeasurable … Only in this pain, in which love, hope and joy are consumed without being destroyed, which threatens to burst our hearts with a full-chorused cry of all the passions, do we live on as ecstatic visionaries … Beethoven's music sets in motion the machinery of awe, of fear, of terror, of pain, and awakens that infinite yearning which is the essence of romanticism … his controlling I detached from the inner realm of sounds and ruling it as limitless master.[49]

My shameless filleting of this passage to draw out the sexual frisson is exactly that – shameless. However, if the reader could indulge me here (for a moment), I want to emphasize the thread that runs through this passage, namely the relationship between the master-status of the composer ('as limitless master', 'als unumschränkter Herr') and the submissive role of the listener, between the operation of power and one's supplication to it. There is something in this relationship that occasions excess, and it is here, in this intensity of the prose style, that the romantic technology goes to work: it refutes the empirical individual in favour of a generalized exemplar of individuality, existing always at the level of the general – individuation here is imagined in some sense collectively, as always, in good (Old) Hegelian terms, dialectically engaged with the more-then-one. The discursive heat brought to bear on the master/listener relationship covers over the gap, I suggest, between empirical and ideal authors by smudging out the subaltern (empirical) other and resolutely holding Beethoven at the level of the general, resolutely holding on to him as symptom of the *Bildung* fantasy, as a generality without limits.

[49] 'So öffnet uns auch Beethovens Instrumental-Musik das Reich des Ungeheueren und Unermesslichen. … nur in diesem Schmerz, der, Liebe, Hoffnung, Freude in sich verzehrend, aber nicht zerstörend, unsre Brust mit einem vollstimmigen Zusammenklange aller Leidenschaften zersprengen will, leben wir fort und sind entzückte Geisterseher. Beethovens Musik bewegt die Hebel des Schauers, der Furcht, des Entsetzens, des Schmerzes, und erweckt jene unendliche Sehnsucht, die das Wesen der Romantik ist. Er trennt sein Ich von dem innern Reich der Töne und gebietet darüber als unumschränkter Herr.' E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, 12/4 (July 1810), columns 630–642, 652–659: 633–634. Trans. by Martyn Clarke, in David Charlton (ed.), *E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 238–9. Translation modified.

In Marx, by contrast, the gap becomes *legible*: 'sparkling with air and pleasure, broad and homely, like the richest man's table'.[50] The gap here between aesthetic discourse and the evocation of the material (the rich man's table, its 'homely' character), is striking. For Žižek (and, by implication, Lacan), gaps like this one (between, for example, the material and the aesthetic) bring a certain pressure to bear on the ego to *invent a formula* through which to traverse that gap. Ego-fantasy thus constitutes a negotiation of an epistemological impasse which, left unattended to, would be the subject's undoing. Žižek frames this in terms of what he terms the 'sexual relationship':

> The role of fantasy hinges on the fact that "there is no sexual relationship", no universal formula or matrix guaranteeing a harmonious sexual relationship with one's partner: because of the lack of this universal formula, every subject has to invent a fantasy of his or her own, a "private" formula for the sexual relationship.[51]

Hence, fantasy (in its Lacanian formulation), as a way of structuring all relationships (but the sexual relationship in particular), might be said to constitute the very process by which we make sense of (or simply make) the world at the level of the particular, as a way of addressing the failures of the universal to speak as/of/for us. The gap that fantasy seeks to smooth over, furthermore, is paradoxical: it constitutes the cavernous and deadly underpinning of desire, and yet is nonetheless also that mechanism by which we are able to (indeed, are *required* to) imagine the very heroes that structure the collective imagination of hegemonic masculinity. The *legibility* of that cavernous fantasy underworld in A. B. Marx is precisely the reason I am figuring him here as a proto-materialist, as one who seeks to traverse the Beethoven-ego-fantasy *in the open*:

> Beethoven the performer and composer, with his thoroughly practised skill of free fantasy in which creation and practice are forged together into a complete artform, had become essential for the Viennese, and was twice and three times welcomed by the music-loving and music-educated aristocracy of Vienna. Everywhere he found open homes and hearts, since he brought pleasure and elevation, which, to this world in particular, was most agreeable and welcome.[52]

[50] Marx, *Beethoven*, 208. My translation.

[51] Žižek, *Plague*, 7.

[52] 'Beethoven als Spieler und Komponist und in der schon früh geübten Kraft der freien Fantasie, in welcher Schöpfung und Ausübung zusammenschmelzen zum vollendeten Kunstereigniß, war nothwendig den Wienern, war dem musikliebenden und musikgebildeten reichen Adel Wiens doppelt und dreifach willkommen. Ueberall fand er offene Haüser und Herzen, denn überall brachte er den Genuß und die Erhebung, die gerade dieser Welt die gemäßesten und willkommensten war.' Marx, *Beethoven*, volume 1, 37.

The Beethoven effect, in other words, is an effect born of specific social relations, specific needs. The legibility of the gap between the idealized (ego-image) Beethoven and the 'Real' (between the 'model' of creative subjectivity that allows us to persist in our own 'creativity' and the discontinuous nature of our empirical existence) resonates also with the work of A. B. Marx's namesake. For that *other* Marx, Young Hegelian and near contemporary of A. B. Marx,[53] the notion that there is a *gap* or mismatch between ways of seeing the world and the world 'as it is' (between 'Überbau' and 'Basis', usually translated as 'superstructure' and 'base') is a foundational tenet of critical (dialectical) materialism: the world is shrouded in ways of seeing that obscure the material basis of our existence. His critique of Proudhon in *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847) and his working through of critical materialism in the *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845) are striking both for their systematic disavowal of idealism and the intense scrutiny of earlier materialisms. The first thesis lays the ground:

> The main defect of all hitherto-existing materialism – that of Feuerbach included – is that the Object, actuality, sensuousness, are conceived only in the form of the *object, or of perception*, but not as *human sensuous activity*, *practice* ['Praxis'], not subjectively. Hence it happened that the *active* side, in opposition to materialism, was developed by idealism – but only abstractly, since, of course, idealism does not know real, sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, differentiated from thought-objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as *objective* activity.[54]

As the determining characteristic of critical materialism, the emphasis on material existence, on what might be termed a certain 'reality' (as some idealized arena of 'truth': the measurable, the demonstrable) is always in play with the ideal (this Marx's critique of Feuerbach is grounded in particular on the observation that Feuerbach's materialism is too 'one-sided').

[53] Adolf was born in 1795 and died in 1866, and Karl was born in 1818 and died in 1883. While Adolf was writing the Beethoven monograph, Karl was working on his *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*.

[54] 'Der Hauptmangel alles bisherigen Materialismus (den Feuerbachschen mit eingerechnet) ist, daß der Gegenstand, die Wirklichkeit, Sinnlichkeit, nur unter der Form des *Objekts oder der Anschauung* gefaßt wird; nicht aber als *sinnlich menschliche Tätigkeit, Praxis*; nicht subjektiv. Daher die *tätige* Seite abstrakt im Gegensatz zu dem Materialismus vom dem Idealismus – der natürlich die wirkliche, sinnliche Tätigkeit als solche nicht kennt – entwickelt. Feuerbach will sinnliche – von den Gedankenobjekten wirklich unterschiedne Objekte: aber er faßt die menschliche Tätigkeit selbst nicht als *gegenständliche* Tätigkeit.' Karl Marx, in *Marx–Engels Werke*, volume 3 (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1969) 5. Translation based on Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*, volume 5 of *Marx/Engels Collected Works* (Moscow/London: Progress Publishers (Moscow) in collaboration with Lawrence & Wishart (London) and International Publishers (New York)), 3 (translator not given).

For both Marxes, the 1840s and 1850s are a time of grand-historical contradictions, between master narratives and their particularization, between *Bildung* and industry. These contradictions find expression in A. B. Marx's Beethoven fantasy, in his ecstatic figurations of Beethoven, certainly, but they are also in some sense at odds with themselves. For the critical materialist, of course, a hero is a figment, a symptom, a manifestation, an exemplar of superstructural sickness; for the Idealist, he is more than mere exemplar or symptom – he is primary agent, the general writ particular, but a particular always dialectically referring back to that generality, standing in for everyman, and yet for no one – the ideal hero is a *conduit* for the flow of discourse, a personification of the addressee of *Bildung*, the *Bildungsmensch*.[55] For Lacan, perhaps the most Hegelian of Freudians, the place of the hero in contemporary discourse is far from exhaustible. Once again, Žižek ventriloquizes Lacan for us: 'the hero is immoral yet ethical – that is to say he violates (or rather, suspends the validity of) existing explicit moral norms in the name of a higher ethics of life, historical Necessity, and so on'.[56] This observation is based on a schematization Žižek makes of the relationship between four types of ethical agent – the saint, the hero, the scoundrel and the superego[57] (Figure 2.1).

The hero in the ego's era is a paradoxical figure, ethical and yet immoral (a figure that 'suspends the validity' of moral norms). This paradox is crucial to both the idealizing and materializing hero: both are ranged in clear opposition to the superego, 'an unethical moral Law, a Law in which an obscene enjoyment sticks to obedience to the moral norms (say, a severe teacher who torments his pupils for the sake of their own good, and is not ready to acknowledge his own sadistic investment in this torment).'[58] The complexities of Freud's notion of the superego need not detain us for long here – we will revisit this 'underside of the Law' in Chapter 3. For the moment, the crucial observation to make about this schema is that it draws

[55] In our so-called 'post-ideological' world where we are supposed to be cynical about such heroes, we are often entreated to figure them as unhealthy ciphers of the submissive–authoritarian impulse, or to dismiss them as hopelessly flawed, a poor match for the hype: 'unglücklich das Land, das Helden nötig hat' [unhappy the land in need of heroes] as that radical and deliciously capricious materialist Bertolt Brecht has his Galilei respond to Andrea's valorization of heroes in scene 13 of his *Leben des Galilei* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, [1938–1939] 1963), 113. Yet it is precisely in this mismatch, in this inadequacy of any empirically encountered 'hero' to its ideal, that the putative need for ego-ordered idealization is generated, and in this our age is not so different from that of the middle of the German nineteenth century: materialism, then, is the other side of the same coin, a sublated Idealism, where *Stoff* is revered above the abstractions of *Idee*.

[56] Slavoj Žižek, *Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays on Woman and Causality* (London: Verso, 1994), 67.

[57] Ian Biddle, 'The singsong of undead labour: Gender nostalgia and the vocal fantasy of intimacy in the "new" male singer/songwriter', in Freya Jarman-Ivens (ed.), *Oh Boy! Masculinities and Popular Music* (London: Routledge, 2007), 125–144.

[58] Žižek, *Metastases*, 67.

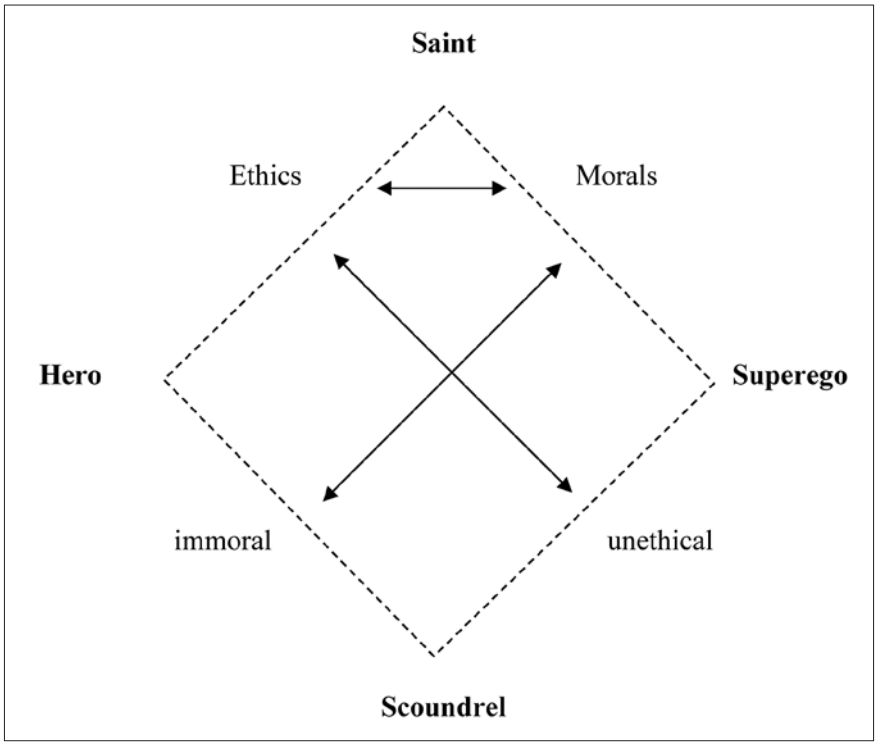


Figure 2.1 Žižek's schematization of 'ethical attitudes'[59]

us closer to the paradox that lies at the heart of all culturally specific modes of 'exemplary subjectivity' the ego's era seeks to construct: I have suggested elsewhere that the composer figure can come to represent both an exemplary masculinity and a caution, rehearsing anxieties about gender contagion and madness.[60] Here, although we are concerned with the specifics of (A. B.) Marx's later Beethoven, we recognize a similar paradox in the evocation of Beethoven as both the exemplary spiritual subject of a cordoned-off Hegelian Arcadia and a figure of a fleshy industrial productivity. In both cases we can determine a clear mismatch between two fundamentally different qualities in the figure of the hero: his *gemütlich* (or *behaglich*) ethical nature and his deadly but strangely intoxicating immoral nature.

Moreover, the gendering of these heroic paradoxes is quite dense: these are ideal *men* of course, but men, as we have seen, that must subsist in a state of

[59] Žižek, *Metastases*, 67.

[60] Ian Biddle, 'Policing masculinity: Schumann, Berlioz and the gendering of the music-critical idiom', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 124(2) (1999), 196–220.

self-unravelling ambiguity; and that paradoxical positioning *in between* singularly fails over and over with ever more legibility to cover over what is missing in the reality these heroes are asked to channel – to be a creature both 'of' the people (of humanity, of its best qualities), and to be fundamentally *other to* an everyday figuration of the collective (as, first and foremost, *individual*), is to never be whole. In this sense the hero does absolutely exemplary ego-work. As we shall see in Chapter 4, it is, for Heinrich Schenker, in the heat of this delicate ambiguity that great art is forged and in which collective humanity always fails to measure up to that art's incitement to individuation.

The 'Siege' of Idealism and the New Sciences

As I intimated above, the historicity of the doubt at the heart of the fading (Old) Hegelian paradigm of Marx's Beethoven, what gives its particularity form after the *Vormärz*, is an encounter with the new popular writings of scientific materialism. Earlier in this chapter, I characterized the ego as needing 'cultural materials' to underpin its fantasy of being whole. It is in the encounter with scientific materialism that the ego of the 1840s and 1850s garners its culturally specific materials, its *Symbolik*, and spins for itself a local discourse of individuation. German-language scientific materialism was a science which, in the 1840s and 1850s, lay the groundwork for the favourable reception of Darwin (with the first German translation of *Origin of the Species* published in 1860, the same year as Gustav Fechner's *Elemente*)[61] by building on the philosophical writings of Feuerbach and the work of the so-called anti-Hegelians, most famous amongst them being the Jena materialist philosophers Karl F. Bachmann and Franz Dorguth.[62] This counter-Idealism, advocating the primacy of the material or sensual world of *Sinnlichkeit* over the so-called 'inner' world, works as a head-on challenge to the programme of Hegelian (Prussian) Idealism and it is this presumptuous Oedipal challenge to the Prussian Academy that moves Karl Fortlage, an outspoken guardian of the (Old) Hegelian status quo, to speak in 1856 of materialism as a virus, a new infection for which there appeared to be no cure;[63] it is this trope, of the soul or spirit as *Mutmaßung* ['supposition'] and the flesh and *Stoff* as primary mechanism of experience – exemplified in the work of the so-called 'underground

[61] *Über die Entstehung der Arten im Thier- und Pflanzen-Reich durch natürliche Züchtung, oder Erhaltung der vervollkommneten Rassen im Kampfe um's Daseyn*, trans. by H. G. Bronn. (Stuttgart: E. Schweizerbart'sche Verlagshandlung und Druckerei, 1860); Fechner, op cit. Fechner refers to his *Psychophysik* as 'eine exacte Lehre von den Beziehungen zwischen Leib und Seele', [an exact study of (or instruction in) the connections between body and soul (or psyche)], v.

[62] See in particular Bachman's *System der Logik* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1828).

[63] Karl Fortlage, 'Materialismus und Spiritualismus', *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung* 30 (1856), 541–8: 541.

trinity' of young materialists Karl Vogt, Jacob Moleschott and Ludwig Büchner – that characterizes the radical science of the 1850s in particular and which touches even that most (Old) Hegelian of works, Marx's *Beethoven*.

The Idealism of the first few decades of the nineteenth century is already under siege by the 1840s, the decade in which Marx completed his polemical *Die alte Musiklehre im Streit mit unserer Zeit*[64] and the third and fourth volumes of his *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition, praktisch-theoretisch* (1845 and 1847). Ludwig Feuerbach's 1839 anti-Hegelian *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Philosophie* was followed in 1841 by *Das Wesen des Christentums* and in 1843 by *Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft* (1843), and of course Karl Marx's *Thesen über Feuerbach* (1845), all of which characterize Hegel and other Idealists as abstracters of human experience to mere *symbols* of human needs, as overemphasizing Idea to the detriment of *Sinnlichkeit* and *Stoff*. In 1845, the year Karl Marx completed his *Thesen*, Alexander von Humboldt, one of the great populizers of German empirical science, published *Kosmos*, which became the most widely read book in Germany apart from the bible.[65] These publications were accompanied by the popularization of materialism in the 1850s with the publication of the populist science journals *Die Natur* and *Das Jahrhundert*. Here, as in many other outlets, materialism dominated and the subtle political undertones, as evidenced in the subtitle to *Die Natur*'s 'trademark' volcano, 'the fire inside is not extinguished; its passion still breaks forth in catastrophic flaming streams from the pores of the earth'[66] were radical, embracing both liberalism and proto-socialism. Feuerbach had already in the 1840s (especially in *Kritik*) demonstrated how recourse to the abstracting principles of Idealism worked in tandem with Prussian authoritarian state-craft.[67]

The radicalism of the new materialism is often overlooked in favour of a rather reductively pessimistic (and, perhaps, conservative) reading of this period. The failure of the so-called 'revolutions' of 1848, in which the Frankfurt *Vorparlament*'s demands for far-reaching constitutional reforms were rejected, ushered in, so the usual story would have it, a period of political introspection, an era of resignation

[64] Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, [1841] 2nd edition 1848.

[65] See William Langer, *Political and Social Upheaval, 1832–1852* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 535.

[66] Quoted in Frederick Gregory, *Scientific Materialism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Dordrecht: Riedel, 1977), 8.

[67] See Frederick Gregory on this: 'For the scientific materialists, and to some extent for [Karl] Marx as well, opposition to groundless authority was the task and natural science was its justification. Science could not be restricted by political force no matter how threatening science might become. Vogt condemned authority in the name of anarchism and Feuerbach, in his review of Moleschott's *Lehre der Nahrungsmittel* of 1850, proclaimed that the truths of natural science were the real revolutionary forces of history. When Büchner finally emerged from this period of personal crisis and depression it was with the cry, "No longer do I acknowledge any human authority over me".' Ibid., 9.

to the mastery of political life by Prussia and the dominance of the aristocracy in policy making. Yet there is something rather overdetermined about this classic historiographical formulation of yet another *neue Innerlichkeit*, since it would seem to lead inexorably to the assessment of the *Nachmärz* or post-1848 period as characterized singularly by bourgeois pessimism and political stagnation.[68] The overwrought historiography of this period, finding expression in its articulation as the first *Gründerzeit*, is also articulated in Carl Dahlhaus's view of its cultural products as 'eclectic' or in some sense 'groundless'.[69] What he terms the 'nature reserve' of Idealism, finds an analogue no doubt in the by then commonplace articulation of music as discontinuous with reality, in the kinds of later romantic 'longing' dismissed with contempt in Young Hegelian Arnold Ruge's *Unsre Classiker und Romantiker seit Lessing* (1846).[70] Music's putative retreat from the *Realpolitik* of the post-revolutionary period is certainly well documented in the music criticism of the period. Franz Brendel's excited politicization of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* and the call for the integration of music into political life by its Young Hegelian contributor C. Kretschmann seemed to fall out of favour by the early 1850s;[71] what *seems* to replace that excited *Durchbruch* is a return to the subtle abstract humanism of the pre-revolutionary period and a shoring up of abstract human ideals as best served by the conservative constitution. This, then, is how the conventional historiography would have it: music retreats inwards and the outside world turns brittle and cold.

This version of the early *Nachmärz* silences the persistent *radicalism* of this period and its continued commitment to a conception of *Kultur* as liberating. The

[68] This historiographical trope undoubtedly finds expression in Dahlhaus's articulation of this period's musical culture as the 'first age of speculators' or first *Gründerzeit*: 'It now seems as though the vast distance that separated music from the central technological and sociohistorical developments of the age favoured the formation of "schisms" in musical language, conveying in retrospect the impression of mid-century "stylelessness" … In the post-1849 "first age of speculators", however, there was no arbiter capable of deciding what was in tune with the times and what was not, thereby setting the aesthetic guideposts of the age.' Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989), 194.

[69] 'Sometimes a failed revolution will leave deeper traces on the human consciousness and the subconscious than a successful one. The revolutions of 1848–9 caused a clean break in the history of ideas: philosophy and humanistic culture, the basis on which the Frankfurt parliamentarians still attempted to make politics, were thereafter relegated by the German bourgeoisie to a "nature reserve" on the periphery of governmental, economic and technological *Realpolitik*. In the age of positivism, music seemed to be isolated from "genuine" reality, forming a world of its own.' Ibid., 194.

[70] *Unsre Classiker und Romatiker seit Lessing: Geschichte der neuesten Poesie und Philosophie. Gesmmalter Schriften*, volume 1 (Mannheim: J. P. Grohe, 1846).

[71] For a useful account of this fall from grace, see Sanna Pederson, 'Romantic music under siege in 1848', in Ian Bent (ed.), *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 57–74.

restrictions of the Carlsbad decrees, ushered in by the nine largest German states in 1819 under the direction of Metternich to tighten up censorship laws, persists in everything but name in the German confederation after 1848, and resistance thus finds ways of working according to the logic of repression: through a subtle and embedded coding of dissent into the apparently 'neutral' findings of science, dissidents are able to continue their assault on absolutism in an intellectual guerrilla warfare.

Towards the First Age of Speculators

The long *Vormärz* (the period leading up to the 1848 'revolutions') had generated a discourse on masculinity that was double-edged: on the one hand, for many the epoch-making 'heroism' of the French Revolution promised both an invigorating paradigm shift, proclaiming the agency of men in the shaping of their own destinies, and a consequent devastating chaotic terror generated by that very freedom (a paradox we recognize in Žižek's schema of the four ethical agencies in Figure 2.1); on the other, the quiet sentimentality of the *Biedermeier* family seemed to have refigured the German ideology of chattel and *Herrschaft* into a dominant discourse of domestic duality – where she resides is home, yet home is mine, to leave and to return to as I see fit. In this duality, in this paradox of the male subject (as both nomadic adventurer and *Hausherr*), medical science seemed to sustain the conservative moral structure of public masculinity: German gynaecology continued to emphasize the fragility of the feminine body, its susceptibility to dampness, fungal infection and degeneration, and offered to German male hegemony a formal basis on which to ground its confinement of the feminine to the domestic space; German embryology persevered still in its radical dematernalization of the nascent self, continuing to emphasize epigenesist ideas (those ideas premised on a view of foetal development that insisted on morphological change in the womb as opposed to the preformationist ideas still prevalent in England), allowing the trope of the abandonment of femininity to continue to function as a core masculine aspiration; psychiatry, moreover, continued to emphasize the crucial determining role of the feminine gender in the demise of masculinity into madness, as a 'contagion'. What casts masculinity in a new light in the 1850s is the new scientism operating as a covert *politics*, not because science suddenly 'becomes' political (it was surely always thus), but because the events of 1848 and the 1850s offered a new context in which to construe the natural world and human agency. Germany's *Schicksalsjahr* ('year of fate') of 1848, it seemed, had ushered in a new historical logic, a logic in which politically frustrated but pointedly dynamic scholarship was to dominate.[72]

[72] The popular agitation for reform in the smaller German states was met with some gains for liberal reformers, but the introduction of a conservative constitution in Prussia (1848 and 1850) nonetheless assured aristocratic hegemony; the Olmütz agreement which tightened Prussian and Austrian military cooperation was comprehensively smashed in

Beethoven Fantasy

The year in which Marx's Beethoven biography was published, 1859, was a year in which the *Kulturnation* was well on its way to becoming a functioning political unit. The extraordinary political events of the 1850s, and their reflection in a new public and politicized masculinity, find distillation in the Beethoven monograph in Marx's well-known remarks on Beethoven's '*Eroica* and ideal music' through a rather overworked hyperbolic troping on the hero:

> The hero symphony, which has seized our attention for so long, is not simply a great work like others; it opens a new artistic epoch, it is, as far as we can judge from everything given within and without the music, definitive ["abschließend"] for this field of art. For it is that work in which musical art becomes independent – without connection with the word of the poet or the manipulation ['Handlung'] of the producer ["des Scenikers"] – and in which an independent work emerges from the play of forms ["des Gestaltens"] and uncertain movements and feelings into the sphere of brighter and more certain consciousness, in which it comes of age and sets itself with equal rank in the circle of its sisters. This advancement cannot be surpassed, it can only be continued, with more or less success ["Glück"], in the sphere thus won.[73]

1859 when the German confederation, under Prussian presidency, failed to aid Austria in the Austro-Sardinian war. This was a period, then, in which Prussia's claims to the leadership of the German lands were strengthened and Austria's hopes for a central place in any future unified German state were dashed. The regency of Prince Wilhelm (1858–1861) of Prussia, in response to the mental illness of king Friedrich Wilhelm IV, once again brought mental illness into public discourse and intensified the discursive connection between military masculinity and hegemony by propagandizing the virile prince as saviour of Prussia from decline, or worse, from being swallowed up by the Habsburgs. The Zollverein or Customs Union (founded 1834) of 23 of the German states, which adopted a common currency in the 1850s, continued to bring about homogenization of tariffs and lay the groundwork for Bismarck's Imperium under Kaiser Wilhelm I in 1871, and it was Austria's refusal to join the Zollverein that sealed its isolation from Bismarck's endgame.

[73] 'Die Heldensymphonie, die uns schon so lange festgehalten, ist nicht blos ein großes Werk, wie andre auch; sie eröffnet zudem eine neue Kunstepoche, sie ist, so weit wir aus allem in und außer der Musik Gegebenen urtheilen können, abschließend für das Gebiet dieser Kunst. Denn sie ist dasjenige Werk, in welchem die Tonkunst selbständig – ohne Verbindung mit dem Wort des Dichters oder der Handlung des Scenikers – und mit einem selbstständigen Werke zuerst aus dem Speil des Gestaltens und der unbestimmten Regnungen und Gefühle heraustritt in die Sphäre des hellern und bestimmtern Bewußtseins, in der sie mündig wird und sich ebenbürtig in den Kreis ihrer Schwestern setzt. Dieser Fortschritt kann nicht überboten, es kann nur in der errungenen Sphäre weiter geschaffen werden, mit mehr oder weniger Glück.' *Beethoven*, volume 1, 275. Translation based on that by Scott Burnham in A. B. Marx, *Musical Form in the Age of Beethoven: Selected Writings on Theory and Method*, ed. by Scott Burnham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 174.

So this is Marx's fantasy: the symphony emerges, into the bright consciousness of (public, masculine) day, by extricating itself from the tyranny of the Other, of words, or the tittle-tattle of *Handlung* (a term linked in the German bourgeois consciousness to a feminized (and feminizing) consumption of luxury goods). The juxtaposition here (of *Handlung* and the *selbstständig* ['independent'] work) is striking but thoroughly commonplace; the conspicuous hyperbole is symptomatic of a broader tendency in German thought after the *Vormärz* to dramatize the polarization of the 'purity' of the artwork and the compromised nature of social and commercial exchange. Music theorists such as Marx are thus caught in a dilemma: as the agency of music (music's potential for intervening in or shaping historical events) seems ever more curtailed, so the desire to articulate the retreat of music from the *Alltag* becomes ever stronger, thus intensifying the de-socialization, the dis-agenting of music, whilst compensating for that intensification with an ever more professionalized and specialized language to characterize musical materials. The so-called 'freedom' from the 'treatment' or 'business' of others that Marx thinks he recognizes in Beethoven's *Eroica*, is meant to open up a new space for articulating agency, but an agency now curtailed, held in, confined, cramped, *disciplined*. This is not a masculinity of the battlefield, of hostile social spaces, of competition, not the exemplary subjectivity of a Beethoven at large, making itself felt by refusing to bend to the external will of others, refusing the company of women. It is, rather, the monumental tautology of *music = music*.[74]

If Marx conceives of the *Eroica* as in any sense breaking through into the public sphere, it is only as a breakthrough within the specific confines of its own materiality; it makes new impudent demands for its ontological status, but engages the social sphere only in so far as it occasions in Marx a certain rhetorical intensity, a certain historicizing impulse. The symphony addresses a material world not as from some sunny island, nor as a force let loose into it, but as a force let loose onto itself, as acting upon itself, as *für sich*, a thing for itself. Marx's articulation of Beethoven's exemplary subjectivity, with its fixation on the personality and the body, is thus at odds with his understanding of the materials as self-constituted. We might characterize Marx's attempts to hold this incongruity together as a kind of ego-work and one symptom of that work is his attempt to conceptualize musical materials as having a self-constituted agency (this point would seem to support Burnham's emphasis on 'style') whilst drawing on contemporaneous images of masculinity: the pouring of agency into the materials, one might say, draws on a rather atavistic imagination of masculine agency from the various Revolutionary

[74] Daniel Chua has written eloquently on this (A. B.) Marxian discourse: 'With the Eroica, instrumental music finally breaks the boundaries of the private sphere to which it had belonged with women and forces its way into the public domain of the male hero, whose death-defying antics are the very embodiment of secular self-creation. But to embody its own genesis, the male form had to enter a new phase of control; it had to deny itself through an internal rationalisation of its emotions.' Daniel Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 150.

eras, but nonetheless brings that imagery into the orbit of the *consuming* bourgeois, into the world of *Verkehr* and the *Kleinbürger*, of 'beer and sausages' as Beethoven himself had described it.[75] Yet Marx never gets beyond the fundamental tautology of the materiality of art music. This is the crux of the matter for him: how to make sense of the decline in musical agency and the intensification of its expressive means; how could it be, in other words, that Beethoven's materials mark such an intensification of musical means just at the very moment that those means retreat into a 'nature reserve'?[76]

To bring the historical masculinity of Beethoven into orbit with bourgeois *Gemütlichkeit* was not, then, an altogether unproblematic undertaking. I have suggested elsewhere that music could appear to bring in its wake a potential sliding into madness, into a putative 'femininity', into a private, domestic space indelibly marked by the feminine.[77] For Marx, *Eroica* therefore erupts with a hyperbolic force, as a compensation, a formal conceit that promises to banish doubts about historical process and formalize an idealized masculine agency.[78] This is a shift from an ethics of music towards historicism, exactly the move that we would expect here. It is an attempt to suture the gap between ethics and the immorality implicit in the hero as sketched out for us by Žižek.[79] This is achieved by Marx by his shifting the focus from the 'habitus' (the enacting of culture onto the body) as an 'inner' space, to habitus *as material for history*, from the soft inside to an external 'hard' exterior: the hero overcomes inner turmoil by living prodigiously *on the outside*. This is a sign, I would suggest, of a specific tension between cultural production and consumption: on the one hand, the productive making of music takes on the role of an externalization, a healthy cultural practice that promises the unburdening of inner turmoil into a deliciously organic cultural *Objekt* or *Gegenstand*; on the other, that production gives rise to a mode of listening that is not simply the complement of that productivity – it is, rather,

[75] Quoted in Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven* (New York: Schirmer, 1977), 212.

[76] Writings from this time certainly abound with synonyms of the nature reserve, of enclosure, but also of impenetrability in the broadest sense: these include *vereinzelt, einsam, abgelegt, sinnlos, bedeutungslos, rechtfertigend, geheimnisvoll, innerlich, dunkel, unbeschreiblich, innewohnend, immanent, unversehrt, unbegreiflich, unergründlich, unbefeigbar* and so on. The abundance of such terms in the 1850s, then, suggests a new intensity in thinking about art music as closed territory.

[77] Biddle, 'Policing'.

[78] See Chua on this again: 'music is no longer an embodiment of moral sensibility but the expression of a historical consciousness. The Eroica rejects the reactions of the body for the action of history. It masters time by constantly bringing the form into a crisis (Kairos) that the hero must resolve to shape history into the Utopian visions of secular humanism.' Chua, *Music*, 153.

[79] Certainly, it might be possible to see this as a full-blown dismissal of the effects-driven model of musical aesthetics, a model exemplified in its most extreme form in the strangely beautiful confessional essay forms of Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder's *Phantasien über die Kunst* (1799) we encountered in Chapter 1.

a woefully inadequate supplement to that productivity with all the structural complexities we noted in Chapter 1 that flow from it. This is, though, qualitatively different to the figurations of listening in the *Frühromantik* we encountered in the first chapter: it is not a simple revisiting of that terrain, but an intensification of that disquiet, with a particular emphasis on the *dis*continuity of listening as a modality of consumption with creative masculinity (for Wackenroder, Hegel and Schelling, cultural production, *Poesie*, effaces consumption altogether as a way of putting in place a coherent singular channel for the distribution of discourse to its universal masculine addressee). The ego-work set in place here is focussed on this gap between cultural production and the consumption of its products.

A close reading of the Beethoven monograph suggests that Marx sees listening subjects as seeking identification with the agency of production, and imagining themselves, so to speak, as Beethovens, whilst nonetheless embracing the pleasures of that listening, foregoing the heightened agency that *becoming* a Beethoven would entail. For Marx, moreover, the consumption of the great *Heldensymphonie* must bend to the articulation of the heroic subject-fantasy that it projects to the will of the visionary such that absolute identification marks absolute music as a site of transfiguration. Indeed, consumption in its most debased form, a simple commercial enactment of a changing of hands of cultural goods, is disciplined in Marx's discourse, but is by no means absent. His own writerly subject operates in silent objectivity, observing the master at work in the messy and beguiling workshop of genius whilst holding on to the pleasures of that workshop's product:

> That play of forms, that playful life of the tones, ought not to be underestimated in comparison with advancements in other fields. Beethoven above all, there is Beethoven, Mozart and Haydn, and Bach, all composers before and after Beethoven in the field of instrumental music, are dependent on him and have found success in him.
>
> …
>
> The play of tones is the primal music ["Urmusik"], it was and always shall be the motherground ["Mutterboden"], from which all that lives in music, extracts its life force, its existence.[80]

[80] 'Jenes Speil des Gestaltens, jenes spielseliges Leben der Töne soll nicht im Mindesten, gegenüber dem Fortschritt in eine andre Sphäre, gering geachtet sein. Vor Allem ist Beethoven, sind vor ihm Mozart und Haydn und Bach, alle Tonkünstler vor und nach Beethoven im Felde der Instrumentalmusik, ihm anhänglich und in ihm glücklich gewesen … Das Speil der Töne ist die Urmusik, es war und wird immer der Mutterboden sein, aus dem Alles, was in Musik lebt, seine Lebenskraft, sein Dasein steht.' Marx, *Beethoven*, volume 1, 275–276. Translation loosely based on Burnham, *Form*, 15.

The ego-work being done here, then, is both quite specific and familiar. Indeed, in the context of the political changes underway in German society at large, this expulsion of the mother (the [self-]extraction from that maternal 'ground'), the throwing of the exemplary subjectivity of the male into the crisis of individuation, forms a new and striking context in which militarized and politically energized masculinity can be propagandized and, crucially, in which ego-work starts to narrate itself *in the open*.[81]

Traversing the Beethoven Fantasy

Marx's characterization of Beethoven's life and works in the 1859 monograph is an elaboration, as we have seen, of a particularly ubiquitous cultural trope of public masculinity as grounded on a productive *fantasy* of wholeness or structural composure. For Lacan, indeed, the fantasy of this wholeness, the ego fantasy, must be understood as a set of discursive operators, constituted in the very fabric of language, of cultural imagery, of historically specific and local materials that nonetheless have a more general consistency. It is important to understand this articulation, then, as a culturalist articulation: fantasy works as a way of playing out structural dynamics that are inherent in particular (and thus contingent) operations of the ego, inherent, that is, to the ego's *particular* ideological underpinnings, but also as having broader cultural–historical resonance. Taken to the next step, a theory of fantasy would also need to be in some sense an extended theory of ideology. To recognize this would be to recognize that masculinities themselves (like any gender(s)) work as sutures over the epistemological inconsistency of the modern personality, that gender itself (as we understand it) is so embroiled in ego work that, in a sense, ego and gender are radically coterminous. Beethoven as a fantasy thus works for Marx as both a suture and as the hyperbole necessary to masculinity's predicament:

> Now let us turn to the work itself. What did Beethoven want? What could he offer? A composition of great size and splendour? That is what our aestheticians would have suggested to him, namely those, both old and new, who attribute to music nothing but the play of forms, or who maintain that it aims at only the most general excitement of vague moods, because it is incapable of "expressing that which is concrete". Beethoven was of another mind. As an artist, he had

[81] It could be objected here, of course, that 'Mutterboden' is a commonplace phrase in German referring merely to native soil or ground and so is used here figuratively, but as part of an everyday idiom. However, it is my view here, along crypto-Gramscian lines, that everyday figuration is as susceptible to close reading as more pronounced figurations: indeed, one could argue that commonplace idioms are perhaps the place where most ideological work has been sedimented.

> nothing to do with lifeless abstractions; like all artists, his vocation was to create life, life out of his own life.[82]

Marx turns up the heat on the work–life relationship and the characterization of Beethovenian creativity as a fashioning of 'that which is concrete' ['das Konkrete'] out of 'life', out of *Stoff*, is achieved by denigrating the feminine, the 'derealization' that Lacan identifies as the work of the ego:

> [There is] not a trace of those abstractions that leave our art nothing but the idea that something – one knows not what – is formed, and something – one knows not what – is felt or sensed. This would be an art for playful girls, incapable of, and unfit for, anything else, and not for men like Beethoven, Bach and all free artists.[83]

What is extraordinary in this passage, its self-evident and breath-taking misogyny aside, is the extent to which Marx seeks to intensify Beethoven's claims to exemplary creativity by *contrasting* him quite specifically and structurally with those 'girls' ['Mädchen'], and, importantly here, with their putative 'aimlessness' and 'incompetence' as if masculinity's claims to *Bildung* as a kind of technical mastery were unassailable. Where Beethoven stands for exemplary teleological productivity, the curtailed feminine, here denigrated and infantilized, stands for its supplement – listening as consuming, passivity, a parasitic luxuriating in the labour of the Master: in the proto-Freudian terms we are using here, listening as a *hysterical* activity. The fantasy that underlines this assertion is thus one that emphasizes a heroic mode of productivity: a denigrated and infantilized feminine figure is made to stand in for a hysterical venality, against which the commanding agency of a public masculinity is pointedly contrasted, grounded, that is, in a productivity that is both material in its 'making' of objects and ideal in its fashioning of new ways of seeing the world. Indeed, Marx revisits the by then already well-trodden Bonaparte-trope as if to underline this dualistic fantasy:

[82] 'Wenden wir uns nun zum Werk selber. Was wollte Beethoven? Was konnte er geben? Irgend eine Komposition von großer, großartiger Gestaltung? So würden wir ihm unsere Aesthetiker gerathen haben, nämlich diejenigen alten und neuen Datums, die der Musik nichts als Formspiel, oder nichts als höchst allgemeine Anregung unbestimmbarer Stimmungen als Aufgabe beimessen, weil sie unfähig sei, "das Konkrete auszusprechen". Beethoven war anderer Ansicht. Als Künstler hatte er mit lebensleeren Abstraktionen nichts zu schaffen; Leben zu schaffen, Leben aus seinem Leben, war sein Beruf, wie aller Künstler.' *Beethoven*, volume 1, 257. Translation based on Burnham, *Form*, 158.

[83] 'Nichts von jenen Abstraktionen, die an unsrer Kunst nichts übrig lassen, als daß irgend etwas, man weiß nicht, was? Sich bilde und irgend etwas, man weiß nicht, was? Sich empfinden oder spüren lasse. Das wäre eine Kunst für spielige Mädchen, die nichts weiter vermöchte und dürfte, nicht für Männer wie Beethoven, Bach und alle wahren Künstler.' *Beethoven*, volume 1, 257–258. Translation based on Burnham, *Form*, 158.

> For Beethoven, Napoleon was *the hero*, who, like any other of these world-moving heroes – be they called Alexander, or Dionysus, or Napoleon – embraces the world with his idea and his will and traverses it, as victor at the head of an army of heroes, in order to fashion it anew. This was no genre-idea, no portrait of Napoleon the man and his battles; what grew within Beethoven was an ideal image in the genuine Greek sense. Moreover it was not even an iconic image of the hero but rather a complete drama of the Napoleonic life;
>
> [it found its germinal seed in the campaigns against the north and south, east and west, in the "hundred victorious battles", to use Napoleon's own designation. And since the poet's job is not to grasp the *breadth* of life but rather the *acme*, the *Idea* of it, the *battle* was thus the necessary first event in Beethoven's programme.][84]

Once again, Idealism and materialism jostle for attention here: on the one hand, Beethoven is *vital*, a life force, making *concrete* art out of that force, the external, hard habitus of industrial masculinity; on the other, this almost hysterical materialism ('am I really a man?' as the hysteric might ask) is mitigated by a tendency to seek out and locate the *Idee*, to extrapolate from *Stoff* a certain idealizing inner structure:

> [There is also] nothing of that historical concretism ["Konkretismus"] that brings names, dates and the complete content of the events and souls involved. Of this, music is not capable, but, then again, it does not want to be, because it is art.[85]

Art, then, stands not just for the highest aesthetic–moral standards, but also opens out a space in which the *Idee* can continue to subsist. The *Idee*, itself, we might say, takes on heroic proportions here. Note also, in the quotation before this one, the particularity of the hero, who, if we return again to Žižek's schema in Figure 2.1, can be clearly located on the left-hand side of the Greimasian square, and

[84] 'Ihm war Napoleon der Held, der, gleich irgend einem an dern dieser weltbewgendem Heroen, – heißen sie nun Alexander, oder Dionysos, oder Napoleon, – mit seinem Gedanken und Wollen die Welt umfaßt, und an der Spitze seiner Heldenschaar siegreich die Welt durchzieht, sie neu zu gestalten. Es war kein Genre-Gedanke, kein Portrait dieses Menschen Bonaparte und seiner Schlachten, es war ein Idealbild in ächt griechischem Sinne, das in ihm emporwuchs. Und es wurde nicht einmal ein ikonisches Bild des Helden, sondern mehr ein volles Drama des Lebens, das er in und um sich entzündet.' *Beethoven*, volume 1, 258. Translation based on Burnham, *Form*, 158–159. The bracketed section is available in the third 1870 edition only (246). I have not been able to track down this section and must rely on Burnham's translation here.

[85] 'Natürlich auch nichts von jenem historischen Konkretismus, der Namen und Jahreszahlen, den vollständigen Inhalt Begebenheiten und Geisten bringt. Das vermag die Musik nicht, aber das will sie auch nicht, weil sie Kunst ist.' *Beethoven*, 258. Translation based on Burnham (ed.) *Form*, 158.

it is the terms 'will', 'traverse', 'victor' and 'fashion' ['Wollen', 'durchziehen', 'Siegreich' and 'gestalten'] that represent the inevitable transgression that marks the hero out from the saint. If, for A. B. Marx, 'the poet's job is not to grasp the *breadth* of life but rather the *acme*, the *Idea* of it' then it is not simply that art might work in vulgar 'realist' terms to concretize the internal world of the artist by means of a simple homology but, rather, it should struggle to manifest it by a complex medium-specific operation. As we shall see in Chapters 3 and 4, one of the crucial determiners of gender at the end of the nineteenth century, and what marks it out from gender ideologies from the outset of that century, is that it is framed by the emergence of what Friedrich Kittler has called a new *Medienlogik*. With the emergence of the discourse of *Stoff*, no more or less metaphysical than that of *Idee* which it tries to oust, it becomes ever more difficult to make a case for what Goethe referred to as universal *translation* ['Übersetzung']. In Chapter 1 we saw how universal translation constituted the principle by which the romantic symbolic economy of poetry sought out the maximum number of addressees – poetry stands for a universal discourse that can be wielded in the confidence that there are no material impediments to its dissemination.[86] For A. B. Marx and his contemporaries, this putative universal translatability of media seems ever more distended, ever more susceptible to the logic of empirical specificity: where Goethe had sung the praises of maximal dissemination, Nietzsche was later to refute that maximalization as 'das Ende von Bildung und die Lust am Unsinn' [the end of *Bildung* and the desire for nonsense (or 'unreason')].[87] This is the specificity of A. B. Marx's poetics: that, in its commitment to the post-romantic economy of *Stoff*, it nonetheless struggles to hold on to an idealizing hermeneutic; this is surely the paranoid mark of the modern personality, of the ego, which Lacan says is structured like a paranoiac symptom.[88]

[86] 'The output of Poets in the discourse network of 1800 constituted a DISTRIBUTION OF DISCOURSES. It provided discourse with a maximum number of addressees. Schlegel's *Fragment on a Characteristic of the German Classic* noted in praise of the classical writer Georg Forster that "convivial communication" was "one of the ideas he was most fond of, one that presented itself to his spirit frequently and in the most varied forms". In this the writer was not far from the merchant. Just as the latter "principally provides for the exchange of material goods", the writer makes possible the "interchange of intellectual goods and creations". Thus an end was set to the limited economy of circulating texts in the Republic of Scholars … Writing was granted literally universalizing and literally textualizing functions: it wove a discourse that encompassed or generated mankind as a whole.' Friedrich Kittler, *Aufschreibesysteme 1800/1900* (Berlin: Fink Verlag, 1985) trans. Michael Metteer *Discourse Networks 1800/1900* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 70. Schlegel extracts: *Georg Forster: Fragment einer Charakteristik der Deutschen Klassiker*, in Ernst Behler (ed.), *Kritische Friedrich–Schlegel–Ausgabe* (Munich, 1958), volume 1, 99.

[87] Kittler, *Aufschreibesyteme*, p. 381.

[88] Lacan, *Écrits*, 1989, 28–32 and *Seminar 1*, 16.

The tension, manifest in the dialectic of *Stoff* and *Idee* in Marx, is played out in the *Beethoven* monograph at several levels. Certainly, in the juxtaposition of *Bildung* (as an abstracted principle of exemplary citizenship) and heroism (the breaking of rules, the dissolution of *Bildung*) we encounter the particularization of the structuring dialectic: the conception of ideal citizenship as enshrined in an ideal (quasi-Hegelian) coming-to-be through a carefully managed acculturation or *Bildung* – a commitment to the idealization of a certain qualitative state of productive belonging forever out of one's reach – is also, as we have seen, a conception of citizenship largely at odds with the shaping and carving gestures of the heroic composer who, by his very designation *as hero*, must throw off the constraints of socially authorized acculturation and yet, paradoxically, must stand for an exemplification of that acculturation *in extremis*. Indeed, Marx is at pains to dramatize the tension between 'technical mastery' of musical materials as exemplified in Beethoven's work (Beethoven as the good, fine and accomplished citizen) and the intensity of that exemplification, its *extraordinariness* (Beethoven as inassimilable and dangerously alluring creative monster–father).

So, if the rhetorical weight of Marx's fantasy of a Beethoven in the first age of speculators is locatable in its function as a suture over the unwieldy encounter of *Stoff* and *Idee* and serves to propogandize a view of masculinity that is under attack, then it would seem also to serve to ground the very masculine authority on which Marx relies for his own sense of self as *a self in crisis*. As we have seen, Slavoj Žižek has written provocatively on the Lacanian construction of fantasy, and, like Marx's fantasy-prop, conceives of it as a crucial element in the self's ability to bear reality:

> [F]antasy is on the side of reality, … it sustains the subject's "sense of reality": when the phantasmic frame disintegrates, the subject undergoes a "loss of reality" and starts to perceive reality as an "irreal" nightmarish universe …; this nightmarish universe is not 'pure fantasy' but, on the contrary, that which remains of reality after reality is deprived of its support in fantasy.[89]

If fantasy works as this 'prop', a support for a reality that would be unbearable without that support, then, we might say, it works also as a means by which the self can *learn* to bear that reality, work it through, attend to it, do what many have called *cultural work*. Marx's version of that fantasy works to locate the self on a particular solid ground, a 'mother ground' (his 'Mutterboden') as a way of negotiating the impossible duality.

An elaborate hymn to the putative militarism of Beethoven's *Eroica*, the technically brilliant analysis of Beethoven's *Eroica* is followed in Marx's monograph with a section entitled 'Die Sinfonia eroica und die Idealmusik' ('The

[89] Žižek, *Plague*, 66.

Eroica Symphony and Ideal music').[90] This section offers an interesting discursive instance of compensatory Idealism: in the name of *Idee*, Marx attempts to show how the 'progressive' elements of the third symphony (those which can easily be aligned with more determinate consciousness ['in die Sphäre des hellern und *bestimmtern Bewußtseins*']) are completely in line with his concept of the *play of forms* ['Spiel des Gestaltens']. This play is problematic, since, in a truly materialist articulation, they come for Marx to stand for a difficult structural impasse, a luxurious but empty dead-end. At the outset of this section, Marx pointedly juxtaposes work ['Werk'] with play, and shortly thereafter unleahses the potential of this juxtaposition by transposing 'Werk' (as in art 'work') to 'Arbeit' (work in the sense of labour):

> Play that serves as its own self-satisfied goal and purpose ["Zweck"] is different from work ["Arbeit"] directed toward a distinct goal ["Zweck"] that lies outside of itself, and has its own profound significance in all the arts and in human existence overall.[91]

This transformation unravels the prose here into a series of spiralling dualisms: on the one hand, the functional, the mundane, the *useful*, and, on the other, the ideal, the lofty, the universal. Indeed, this whole section juxtaposes *Zwecklichkeit* (the useful, the instrumental) and *Seligkeit* (blessedness, beatitude, spirituality) in such a way as to bring us back to the fluidity of Marx's writing ('irritating' for Spitzer), which articulates a historically quite specific inexactitude in the structure of his response to materialism.

Epilogue

The end of Marx's monograph makes this point well: before the extensive *Anhang* of the second volume (first edition of 1859), Marx finishes the biography proper of Beethoven with a section entitled 'Der Ausgang', 'the exit'. He closes that section with the following:

[90] Scott Burnham wisely chose to leave great swathes of this strange section out of his abridged translation, especially Marx's assessment of Schindler's, Oulibicheff's and Fétis's assessments of the symphony. Burnham, *Form*, 174–179.

[91] 'Das Spiel, das im Gegensatz zu der auf einen bestimmten außerhalb ihrer liegenden Zweck gerichteten Arbeit, sich selber Zweck und darum in sich selber begnügt ist, es hat in allen Künsten und in Dasein des Menschen überhaput seine tiefe Bedeutung.' *Beethoven*, volume 2, 275–276. I have left Burham's translation untouched here, although the use of 'goal' for *Zweck* ('use, purpose') introduces an element of teleology that is not present in the German (at least not explicitly).

> [O]n the 29th March 1828, the grave was marked with a simple *Denkmal*. A funerary choir sang in the manner of the departed: You, who in life never found/a resting place or hearth or home:/rest then in the still/grave, in death![92]

The veracity of this end is probably questionable, but the point I want to finish with here is this: Marx can never end his oscillation between *Idee* and *Stoff*. The final incantation at the graveside juxtaposes the blissful end of life with a life lived in turmoil: the burden of Beethoven for Marx was always already to be posthumous, to haunt the tradition, to stalk it in bad faith, and to carry the burden of that bad faith.

As a symptom of a certain moment in the progress of the ego, Marx's monograph shows how writing about music can intervene, in quite telling ways, in the historical development of the modern personality. As both a testing of a certain historiographical blasphemy, and a close reading of a music-theoretical text, this chapter has placed the question of the historiographical frame centre stage: when the historical question is asked retrospectively, it changes fundamentally the materials it seeks to investigate. The retrospective reading from Freud and Lacan of Marx's ego-work is contrary to much of what historicism would deem appropriate and howls and froths at historicism and the musicologies it has produced. That disavowal, however, has meant taking historicism deadly seriously here, for blasphemy always entails a commitment to the belief system one seeks to destabilize. In this sense, our musical Marx shows how a reading from the historiographical frame of Lacan's ego's era can bring our own predicament into a rich and rewarding engagement with different moments in the progress of that ego. As the work of an activist history, that at least ought to convince us of the usefulness of loosening the disciplinary bounds in order to bring the present into a critical relationship with itself.

92 '[A]m 29. März 1828 wurde das Grab mit einem einfachen Denkmal bezeichnet. Ein Trauerchor sang nach einer Weise des Geschiedenen: Du, dem nie im Leben/Ruhstätt ward und Heerd und Haus:/Ruhe nun im stillen/Grabe, nun im Tode aus!' *Beethoven*, vol. 2, 330.

Chapter 3
Rage Against the Rabble: Gender Nostalgia and the Metropolitan Imagination in Heinrich Schenker's *Kontrapunkt* (1910 and 1922)

there is, somewhere above the artwork, a place from which one can see and hear from the spirit of the artwork all its pathways and goals, its dawdling and raging, all its variety and limitation, all its dimensions and relations.[1]

(Heinrich Schenker)

In the wonderment of this taxonomy, the thing we apprehend in one great leap, the thing that ... is demonstrated as the exotic charm of another system of thought, is the limitation of our own, the stark impossibility of thinking that.[2]

(Michel Foucault)

Introduction: Habitus Hegemonicus

The rigours of taxonomy (from the Greek *τάξις* or *taxis* ['arrangement'] and *νόμος* or *nomos* ['law']) are constituted in the assumption that there is a place from which to observe the order of things, a place from which to be *outside* that order. To imagine the possibility of seeing the world in types, species, forms, as all laid out in front of us, is to imagine a space beyond all content, an *empty* and privileged space. Recourse to taxonomy is something of which Michel Foucault was thus especially fond since, it seems, it afforded him a certain shortcut or detour around the myriad details that assail any historian. His was, in a quite important sense, an anti-history or, to put it another way, his was a 'history' which the discipline of history finds wanting. Especially in *Les mots et les choses*, Foucault is prone to taxonomical frenzy, to almost epic and mythological imaginings of what he terms 'la trame sémantique de la ressemblance' [the 'semantic web of resemblance'] in the early modern: see, for example, the great string of terms he lifts without

[1] Heinrich Schenker, 'Das Hören in der Musik', *Neue Revue* 5(2) (1894), 115–121; repr. Helmut Federhofer (ed.), *Heinrich Schenker als Essayist und Kritiker: Gessamelter Aufsätze, Rezensionen und kleinere Berichter aus den Jahrn 1891–1901* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1990), 96–103: 103. My translation.

[2] Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses* (Paris: Editions Galliard, 1966), 32; *The Order of Things* (London: Routledge, 2003), 20. Translator not given.

comment from Pierre Grégoire's 1610 treatise on the marvellous, the *Syntaxeon artis mirabilis*: '*Amicitia*, *Aequalitas* (*contractus*, *consensus*, *matrimonium*, *societas*, *pax, et similia*), *Consonantia*, *Concentus*, *Continuum*, *Paritas*, *Proportio*, *Similtudo*, *Conjuncto*, *Copula*'.[3] This is the great order of things, and Foucault can see it all, from his calm analytical space, characterized by what Terry Eagleton has called a 'distanced dispassionate tone, a measured, mandarin French serenely unruffled by its own shocking contents'.[4] There is, then, something both analytic and sensationalist in the taxonomic in which Foucault delights: the taxonomic here allows the frisson of disgust to subsist under a kind of voyeuristic logic covered over with the garb of categories, orders, rituals of sorting.

At the Viennese *fin de siècle*, admittedly a place Foucault rarely visited, taxonomies proliferate, but, unlike the exotic taxonomies of Borges's Chinese encyclopaedia,[5] they do so according to a logic that is seductively *close* to our own: they proliferate, it seems, in order to fill out or thicken the empirical texture of the world. Laughter fills Foucault's response to the exotic taxonomies of distant places, and the purpose of that laughter is quite explicit – to articulate the seductive and beguiling nature of difference and to mark our uncanny dislocation from ourselves in the encounter with that difference. There is also laughter to be had for us in the face of *fin-de-siècle* Viennese taxonomies, but this is a laughter that resounds in response to a set of epistemological problems uncomfortably similar to our own: the seductive epistemological closeness of the last Viennese *fin de siècle* but one, its metropolitan imagination, its fascination for decline, fragmentation and degeneration and its obsession with the beguiling 'inner' self, might so easily stand in for our own late modern predicament. Vienna, we might say, is always *timely*. There is, we might also say, no empty space here; we are always already *among* the typologies, always already implicated, *inside*. What is uncanny here is precisely the opposite of what is uncanny for Foucault: this is not the uncanny encounter with the incomprehensible, but the uncanny encounter with the dreadfully familiar.

Péter Hanák notes something quite remarkable about the imagination of what we might call 'the modern' at this Viennese *fin de siècle*:

> [i]n Vienna, modern meant submersion into an inner reality, the psyche […] to be modern was to listen to the grass grow and the tremors of the soul, an instinctive, somnambulant surrender to any expression of beauty. Hysteria, neurosis, and

[3] Foucault, *Order*, 28.

[4] Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (London: Blaxkwell, 1990), 384. Eagleton continues: 'Pressed to an extreme, such a conflation of clinicism and sensationalism is the stuff of pornography'.

[5] Foucault, *Order*, xvi. The strangeness or exoticism of the taxonomical logics that Foucault is drawn to here is not something we need dwell on other than to note the efficacy of this passage in demonstrating how systems of thought do not readily make themselves available to the scrutiny of other systems.

> dreams were favoured subjects, not to say symptoms, of the erudite elite well before Freud.[6]

Hanák's suggestive alignment of Vienna and Budapest with the spaces of the garden and the workshop respectively is useful: where late nineteenth-century Budapest is a place of industry, of work and productivity, late nineteenth-century Vienna is beset by dreamy inconsequential men who see the garden as their refuge from the noisy city:

> The Garden meant either what it is by primary definition, a closed-off piece of preserved nature or, metaphorically, a place of solitude and retreat; or as with Rilke, the antithesis to the bleak concrete landscape of the chaotic metropolis. So the Garden was not just a refuge for body and soul but was the vehicle for aesthetics, the unity of man as a product of nature and the work of art as a product of man. […] The Garden and solitude, solitude and the narcissistic self – these are ready metaphors.[7]

Retreat, enclosure, quiet, acoustic isolation from the roar of the city: these are the 'ready metaphors' that also attend writing about music at this *fin de siècle*. Music is the call to retreat, a place in which the internal world is delivered up, balmed, nourished. Modernity is harsh and brash and, for the garden-dwelling dreamy aesthetes of Vienna, it lies *outside*.

To think this topography in relation to gender is to enter into a complex and contradictory world in which public and private seem to be both merging slowly into each other and yet, paradoxically, separating out from each other as never before (the contradiction is key here). The conventional historiographies of gender (even those setting out to radicalize gender relations) have consistently sought to diagnose differential spaces and linguistic cultures as technologies used to organize gender distinctions. In Vienna we encounter a challenge to that historiography since men's *Innerlichkeit* at the Viennese *fin de siècle* is well developed and symptomatic of a thorough-going reclamation of the private sphere from the feminine. This wresting of territory from the feminine, its re-colonization in the name of an inner quietude, is also, as we shall see, part of a rearguard action against a perceived waning of male hegemonic power.

The processes that led to this moment, and which placed women in perhaps one of the most precarious and vulnerable positions since the middle of the eighteenth century, are bound up with the consolidation of material science (and pseudo-science). Hegemonic masculinities, those which shored up, enriched and polemicized atavistic claims to men's *a priori* right to public discourse, become endlessly describable at the Viennese *fin de siècle* by means of a new proliferation

[6] Péter Hanák, *The Garden and the Workshop: Essays on the Cultural History of Vienna and Budapest* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 68.

[7] Ibid., 68.

of taxonomial adjectives: it becomes possible to speak empirically or 'in detail' of men, to understand men as objects of scrutiny, to construe them as susceptible to the operation of discourse. In this Vienna, then, Marx's muscular Beethoven, that prodigiously material figure of the 1859 Beethoven monograph, is normalized, ubiquitized, standardized into the figure of the fleshy, lumpen artist: in this, the Austro-German *fin de siècle* marks a 'thickening' (a somatizing) of the solidity of masculine hegemony by making available to that hegemony a new set of epistemological tools with which to define, circumscribe and construe itself. This new self-reflection nonetheless also brings a consequent and paradoxical 'thinning' of hegemony, which threatens men's exclusive access to discourse: characterization, description and other forms of empirical 'capture' are those very same processes by which men had sought to 'capture' the feminine and through which man now becomes the *object* of his 'own' discourse. This is the double bind of the new empirical man-object: on the one hand it is 'thickened' by its detailed taxonomical capture in the empirical discourses; on the other, it thereby loses its invisible, relatively unchallenged, status as silent and invisible bearer of discourse and its cultural sphere of operation is reduced.

A commonplace response to this predicament, like all such predicaments, was to appropriate more self-consciously atavistic discursive markers of masculinity – markers which had given the illusion, until the medicalization of men that marked this *fin de siècle*, of a masculinity operating without impediment. These atavistic markers – amongst which we might include the employment of an authoritative or assured prose style, the symbolic reproduction of physical strength, uprightness, moral and intellectual superiority and a firm grasp of the public arena – seem, in the *fin de siècle* imagination, to be about calling up an 'Arcadian' or naturalized masculinity. What characterizes the operation of hegemonic masculinity at the Viennese *fin de siècle*, then, is a certain *gender nostalgia*.

Demonstrating a firm grasp of the public discourse is about demonstrating one's technical facility and one's professional command of the stuff of discourse. Hence, figuring authority, reputation and/or professional competence as contiguous with virility, men make use of what we might characterize as a *demonstrative* discourse. This finds expression in body-discoursing through an emphasis on bodily well-being and a normalized physical masculinity on the one hand, and in the aestheticization of political life and a withdrawal into the intellect (a flight *from* the body into the Garden) on the other. The Danish pedagogue Jens Peter Müller's exaggerated Hellenic poses in his exercise system *Mein System* (1905) demonstrate how the nostalgic masculinity of the *fin de siècle* finds expression also in a rage against the new:

> A portion of the authors of our *belles-lettres* have done incalculable harm to the young people in our society by systematically championing, through personal example as well as through their writings, a mixture of exclusively intellectual culture, physical weakness and moral sickness. … The typical office worker in big cities is often a sad sight. Hunched over in early years, his shoulders and

> hips made crooked by the awkward position at his desk, his face pale, pimply, and powdered, his thin neck sticking out of a collar that a normal man could use as a cuff, his foppish, fashionable suit rotating around pipe-cleaners that are supposed to be arms.[8]

Müller's emphasis on physicality underlines the nostalgic quality of masculinity at the *fin de siècle* and shows how that nostalgia can find expression in exaggerated binarisms: sickly modern urban (false) man vs the healthy physicality of the (true) Arcadian, intellectuals vs the 'normal', moral weakness vs moral health. It is also evident here that the proximity of physical and moral weakness is meant to dramatize the moral malaise of metropolitan culture, a malaise which is written onto the bodies of its weak and sickly men. The *Körperkult* or body cult of the Viennese hegemon thus always finds its counterpart in the dreamy aestheticism of groups like the Secessionists and their emphasis on ornament and, in its popular reception, on the consumption of *objets d'art*.[9] Hence, the 'virility' of which I speak above is neither fully 'physical' nor completely figurative, but held at the level of discourse, having a vividly affective and effective cultural life – it functions at the level of the habitus, the discursive imagination of the body, the operation of culture onto the body. Its locale is the symbolic economy of the garden.

Images of exemplary male bodies, of exemplary masculine physical attitudes, undoubtedly shape the discursive operation of hegemonic masculinity, but it is also in the *invisibility* of the male body, its trussing and wrapping in the anonymous garb of institutional misogyny, that masculinity continues to try to operate its invisible monopoly (to remain invisible is to remain omnipotent, it seems): this is the other side of gender nostalgia, its yearning for the discursive *silence* of an Arcadian masculinity that can assert itself without effort, can master the world without the need for the machinery of mastery; this is the yearning for the always-already-ness of masculinity. The 'strong' gender thus attempts to sustain its operative power by engaging a dichotomous strategy: a *refusal* of physical objectification – resisting its reconstitution by the new sciences and continuing to insist on physicality as a privileged site of the feminine – on the one hand, and an *embracing* of exaggerated nostalgic images of physical masculinity on the other.

Characteristics, typologies, nomenclatures – the stuff of taxonomy – operate as shorthand for the messy operation of cultural fields for commentators on gender and sexuality at this *fin de siècle*. The characteristics of masculinity, which proliferate in the new *fin de siècle* 'sciences' of gender and sexuality, are too numerous to name, but those of the male hegemon centre on physical and figurative solidity – *Festigkeit*, *Standhaftigkeit*, *Geradheit*, *Rechtschaffenheit*,

[8] Jens Peter Müller, *Mein System*, 3rd edn (Copenhagen: Holger Tillge, 1905), 7; trans. and quoted by Mark M. Anderson, *Kafka's Clothes: Ornament and Aestheticism in the Habsburg Fin de Siècle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 80.

[9] For a critique of this pervasive aestheticism, see Adolf Loos, *Ins Leere Gesprochen 1897–1900*, ed. by A. Opel (Vienna: G. Prachner, 1921).

Zuverlässigkeit, *Tapferkeit*, *Aufrichtigkeit*, *Virilität*, *Zeugungskraft*. The typologies are fewer – soldier, monarch, entrepreneur, worker, artist, author, intellectual; the nomenclatures are fewer still – *man*, and in the new medicalized discourse of sexuality, *heterosexual*. In this taxonomy, the logic of masculine 'solidity' or *Festigkeit* is assured by recourse to the new medical 'sciences' of sexology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis. In 1886, Richard Krafft-Ebing published his *Psychopathia Sexualis*,[10] in which he outlined the prospect for a science of sexual pathology and in which hegemonic masculinity ('the divine image of the poet') is juxtaposed with its shadowy counterparts ('horrid caricatures'):

> Whosoever proposes psychopathology as [the object of] scholarly study confronts there the dark sides of human existence and the sufferings of man in whose shadow the glistening divine image of the poet is turned into horrid caricatures and the aesthetic and the moral lose faith in the eternal image of God. It is the sad privilege of medicine, and especially of psychiatry, to have to witness the reverse side of life, human weaknesses and wretchedness.[11]

The almost melodramatic (Gothic, even) characterization of counter-hegemonic masculinity is interesting here for its fidelity to a hard binaristic distinction between moral and immoral sexuality. Just as the 'glistening divine image of the poet' ['das glänzende Götterbild des Dichters'] finds its counterpart in his 'dark sides of human existence' ['einer Nachtseite menschlichen Lebens'], so *fin-de-siècle* gender and sexuality, as medicalized discourses of the modern personality, work with these asymmetrical binarisms, placing a certain amount of pressure on the undersides, hidden worlds, dark mirror images, others, to throw the bright hegemony of the bourgeois male into ever clearer relief. This underworld is peopled by the pale and the emaciated, a derivative world of mockery, mimicry, false gods and vicious dandies. Most crucially, this underworld is also a world of the rabble, of the mindless collective, Nietzsche's 'valley dwellers', the vernacular horde. This is how gender nostalgia at the *fin de siècle* is played out – through homophobia, misogyny, misanthropy and an ever present aristocratic disdain for the collective.

[10] Richard Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia sexualis: Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der konträren Sexualempfindung. Eine medizinisch-gerichtliche Studie für Ärzte und Juristen*, 14th expanded edn (ed.) Alfred Fuchs (Munich: Matthes and Seitz Verlag, 1997).

[11] 'Wer die Psychopathologie des sexuellen Lebens zum Gegenstand einer wissenschaftlichen Abhandlung macht, sieht sich einer Nachtseite menschlichen Lebens und Elends gegenübergestellt, in deren Schatten das glänzende Götterbild des Dichters zur scheußlichen Fratze wird und Moral und Ästhetik an dem "Ebenbild Gottes" irre werden möchte. Es ist das traurige Vorrecht der Medizin und speziell der Psychiatrie, dass sie beständig die Kehrseite des Lebens, menschliche Schwäche und Armseligkeit schauen muss': Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia sexualis*, iv–v. My translation.

Thinking Schenker's Reputation or, on Ideology and Pleasure

If nostalgia and the rage against the new are anything to go by, then there is no greater misanthrope than Heinrich Schenker. Infamous for his attacks on his contemporaries, his acerbic invectives against new music, and his unrelenting championing of the 'great tradition' from Bach to Beethoven and Brahms, Schenker has come to stand for a certain quality of engagement, a certain stylistics of public invective. Yet what are the cultural and historical mechanisms by which invective was produced and consumed for Schenker's contemporaries? If, as seems a safe assumption, invective is governed by a set of rules (of engagement, convention, ritual), and by a keenly felt sense of where the law of polite bourgeois public consensus can be transgressed, then it is a precarious business indeed, fraught with the possibility of getting ensnared by the endlessly malleable boundaries at the edge of what counts for decency. To engage in invective, then, is to open oneself up to a certain vulnerability. In the context of the epistemology of the Garden, this vulnerability works, I suggest, as a strategy for managing public discourse by bringing danger to those who sought to transgress the law of consensus. There is a consequent argument to be made, and one which I have made elsewhere, that feigning vulnerability is also a way of holding onto power.[12]

Whether feigning vulnerability or indulging in the complex strategic engagement of the gender-nostalgia matrix, men had to relearn their mastery of the public sphere by developing a new performative grasp of discourse. Disagreement, argument and informal discoursing form part of this new performative world of the public realm. In it, invective, disagreement and the ritualized denigration of one's opponents and competitors (we are, after all, in Vienna's so-called second age of the speculators) become commonplace symptoms of a new discursive venturism. Invective, where sanctioned at the Viennese *fin de siècle*, resides in the writerly and speakerly practices of friendly avowal, hostile disavowal and professional tribute, in the publicly performed rituals of discursive space clearing, debate and professional annihilation, all of which are susceptible to the conventions of discourse and all of which are rigorously constrained by those conventions.

Most commentators on Schenker, especially Anglophone commentators it seems, are keen to demonstrate the inescapable ubiquity of these conventions, this everyday rough and tumble in the music criticism of Schenker's milieu, as if this 'generalising', a term used by Nick Cook,[13] were able to furnish a defence against the accusation of misogyny or classism. The relation between convention

[12] Ian Biddle, 'The singsong of undead labour: Gender nostalgia and the vocal fantasy of intimacy in the "new" male singer/songwriter', in Freya Jarman-Ivens (ed.), *Oh Boy! Masculinities and Popular Music* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 125–144: 133–134. My argument there was based on a reading of Suzanne R. Stewart's *Sublime Surrender: Male Masochism at the Fin de Siècle* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).

[13] Nicholas Cook, *The Schenker Project: Culture, Race and Music Theory in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 179.

and responsibility is a complex one, to be sure, but the conveyor belt of almost reliogiose apologias for what Snarrenberg calls 'Schenker's argument' begins to look like a particular kind of concerted effort: what entices, amuses, delights and brings frisson in Schenker for these commentators is probably precisely the thing which they seek to apologize for, that which is precisely and systematically worked for in Schenker, the denigration of both the feminine and the vernacular. It is a convention, to be sure, but no less destructive or ever present in our own assumptions on music for that. *Fin-de-siècle* invective, that particularly intense form of public discourse, draws on a chronologically limited and quite young imagination of the subject: one that is constituted in the new 'sciences' outlined above – in psychoanalysis, raciology, psychiatry, sociology and sexology – such that claims to public discourse are made in the name of race, mental 'health' and physical strength. What fails to live up to those claims (what is set up to fail) is precisely that which Schenker seeks to marginalize and silence.

As we shall see, debates about the nature and scope of masculine subjectivity are particularly charged at the *fin de siècle* with a necessity also to engage and dispatch the 'dissident' genders of the *Neues Weib* ['new woman'] and the *Urnischer Mensch* ['Uranian'] since the hegemonic masculine subject experiences itself as overdetermined by both friendly and antagonistic discourses, assailed on all sides by the atomizing dynamics of accelerating industrialization, rapid population growth and migration, and theorizations of gender and sexuality that begin to unsettle hetero-normativity. A commonplace rehearsal of the anxieties caused by the unsettling of the male hegemon is to be found in invective against *collectivity* or the crowd, in opposition to which the besieged male bourgeois posed itself (from within, as Hanák would put it, the logic of the garden). This is an imagination of the male self that, in the Viennese context in particular, is almost overdetermined in the work of Freud and his contemporaries, a self that construes, in popular discourses at least, the relationship between individuality and collectivity as between two irreconcilable poles of experience, the mob and the genius, the herd and the shepherd, the crowd and the hero. In this sense, the *fin-de-siècle* discourse of the *guter Ruf* or fine reputation, as it is manifest in particular in academic discourse, appeals to an imagined collectivity as its self-constituting Other, as something on which it relies for its own authority.

One characterization of that Other, articulated in detail by Freud in 1923 but intensely prefigured by him as early as the 1890s, is as something located at the register of the *superego* ['das Überich'].[14] For Freud, what happens in the formation

[14] Sigmund Freud, *Das Ich und das Es* [1923], *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), vol. 13, 237–289. Although Freud does not use the term until 1923, the superego finds many precedents in his earlier work, especially the notion of 'censorship' [Zensur], first used in his 1895 'Zur Psychotherapie der Hysterie' [1895] in *Studien über Hysterie* (with Breuer) *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 1, 75–312. Freud's notion of censorship clearly articulates something very useful for our purposes here. In this study of hysteria, Freud makes the following remarks

of the superego is that an idealized Other works as an imagined *plurality* that helps the ego constitute itself as *singular*. This Other finds expression in particular in feelings of being watched, of coming under some 'external' pressure, a feeling that if one act *this* way, however much one fall in line with the written Law of the Father (of the state, of civil society), one is then always susceptible to the operation of another law, a law poised at a precarious interface between inside and out, at the *messy intersection of ideology and pleasure*.[15]

The porosity of this boundary between ideology and pleasure can be demonstrated in the case of Schenker both in the character of his writing and in the direct appeals his work makes, especially in the more overtly discursive passages such as the prefaces of the two volumes of *Counterpoint*,[16] to its readers for their agreement on the awfulness of the mob. There is no doubt that the reception of Heinrich Schenker is characterized by, amongst other things, its community-generating character, in striking contrast to Schenker's own *Schreibensart*. Schenker-*cognoscenti* and Schenker-bashers alike have clustered into communities of critical (and technical) practice that sustain themselves through recourse to mechanisms far less 'rational' than they would care to admit:[17] in *fin-de-siècle*

regarding the nature of the 'pathogenic ideas' that contributed to the analysand's symptoms of hysteria: 'Aus diesen ersah ich eninen allgemeinen Charakter solcher Vorstellungen; sie waren sämtlich peinlicher Natur, geeignet, die Affekte der Scham, des Vorwurfes, des psychischen Schmerzes, die Empfindung der Beeinträchtigung hervorzurufen, sämtlich von der Art, wie man sie gerne nicht erlebt haben möchte, wie man sie am liebsten vergißt. Aus diesem ergab sich wie von selbst der Gedanke der Abwehr. Es wird ja von den Psychologen allgemein zugegeben, daß die Annahme einer neuen Vorstellung (Annahme im Sinne des Glaubens, des Zuerkennens von Realität) von der Art und Richtung der bereits im Ich vereinigten Vorstellungen abhängt, und sie haben für den Vorgang der Zensur, dem die neu anlangende unterliegt, besondere technische Namen geschaffen.' From the later Fischer edition: Freud and Breuer, *Studien über der Hysterie* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1991), 285. Censorship thus works for Freud as a self-regulation, drawing on internalized (internally processed) functions of the law.

[15] In this, Josef K.'s indictment by the strange unruly court in Franz Kafka's *Der Prozeß* stands as almost unrivalled exemplar. Franz Kafka, *Der Prozeß*. *Gesammelte Werke* (ed.), Max Brod (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1997 [1914]).

[16] Heinrich Schenker, *Kontrapunkt I* (Stuttgart and Berlin: J. G. Cotta 1910); *Kontrapunkt II* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1992). *Counterpoint I* and *Counterpoint II* (trans.) John Rothgeb (New York: Schirmer Books, 1987).

[17] The list is very long for both sides. For an eloquent defence, see Pieter van den Toorn, *Music, Politics and the Academy* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995); for an eloquent prosecution, see Lawrence Kramer, 'Haydn's chaos, Schenker's order; or, Hermeneutics and musical analysis: Can they mix?', *19th-Century Music* XVI(1) (summer 1992), 3–17. See also: Nicholas Cook, *Project*, and the earlier 'Heinrich Schenker, anti-historicist', *Revista de musicologia* 16(1) (1993), 420–432; Wolfgang Suppan, '"Musik der Menge": "Volk" und "Volksmusik" in den Schriften Heinrich Schenkers und seines Schulers Viktor Zuckerkandl. Mit einem Anhang: Viktor Zuckerkandls bisher ungedruckter Aufsatz uber "Das Staunen. Verhaltnis von Mensch und Musik"', in Christoph-Hellmut Mahling

Vienna, invective was rarely, in the defence or disavowal of reputation, simply a matter of identifying 'rationally' (at the level of Freud's later articulation of the 'Ich' or 'ego') with a side of the debate, but more commonly of identifying with a certain frisson-giving transgressive pleasure – the communal enjoyment generated by overdetermined invective against the 'enemy' is a crucial part of the group identification, and that transgression is what ultimately reinforces the identity of critical communities.

Schenker, of course was not alone in the long *fin de siècle* in seeking to mark out the crowd or the collective as prone to following the basest instinctual urges. As we shall see, for Gustave Le Bon, Nietzsche and Freud alike, the crowd represented the lowest, most perverse and deviant situation in which the individual becomes susceptible to a powerful and debilitating *contagion*. Yet their writing employs strategies designed to appeal precisely to the collectives' 'instinctive', 'base', 'vile' urges that they sought to critique. For Freud, as we have already noted, the pleasure or *Lust* at transgressing *with others* (or imagining such a trangression) is to be located at the register of the superego or *Überich*, an agency of the psyche that is governed by a Law that has been internalized, as a set of mediated interpretations of external (moral, patriarchal) Law, and reworked as a pressure brought to bear on the 'free' agency of the ego. This pressure often finds expression in a desire to act up, to ritually transgress the external Law in order to emphasize the autonomy of the internalized law, to give it free rein. Whilst the 'source' of the law of the superego is an external communitarian and clandestine law, it is also a law that is internalized and thereby radically transformed: this internalized law (in the lower case) 'rediscovers' its own communitarian character in a ritualized communitarian expression of transgression.[18]

and Ruth Seiberts (eds), *Festschrift: Walter Wiora zum 90. Geburtstag (30 Dezember 1996)* (Tutzing: Schneider, 1997) 471–491; William Pastille, 'The God of Abraham, Aquinas, and Schenker: art as faith in an age of unbelief', *Indiana Theory Review* 16 (spring–fall 1995), 105–144.

[18] Slavoj Žižek gives the example of Robert Reiner's film *A Few Good Men*, in which covert adherence to the 'code red' allows a group of soldiers to punish (murder) one of their group who has broken the ethical code of the group: 'The function of this "code red" is extremely interesting: it condones an act of transgression – illegal punishment of a fellow soldier – yet at the same time it reaffirms the cohesion of the group – it calls for an act of supreme identification with group values. Such a code must remain under cover of night, unacknowledged, unutterable – in public, everybody pretends to know nothing about it, or even actively denies its existence. It represents the 'spirit of the community' at its purest, exerting the strongest pressure on the individual to comply with its mandate of group identification. Yet, simultaneously, it violates the explicit rules of community life … Where does this splitting of the law into the written Law and its underside, the 'unwritten, obscene secret code, come from? From the incomplete, "non-all" character of the public Law: explicit public rules do not suffice, so they have to be supplemented by a clandestine "unwritten" code aimed at those who, although they violate no public rules, maintain a kind

In this psychoanalytic sense, invective strategies can be seen as a way of taking a set of institutionally projected assumptions and internalizing them, making them seem 'natural', or 'proper to me/us' whilst simultaneously realigning or reinforcing the constructive power of the institution's authority: invective is a very reliable marker of the register of the superego since it is invariably about taking ownership of the anonymous 'written' Law and de-anonymizing it, making it *ours*. As we shall see, the collective underside of musical discourse, the 'dubious' pleasures of thinking about music in and for the group, is something of which the *Gelehrtenstand* of the *fin de siècle* was particularly suspicious, but, crucially, ultimately desirous.

In Schenker's writings, invective can be understood as showing fidelity to a structure not unlike the Freudian split Law/law. We can see the idea of a split law working on several levels in, for example, the bright moral law of the genius/master/individual as pitted against the dark impenetrable law of the rabble/collective/crowd, with the latter nonetheless serving (structurally, as it were) to support the former, to throw it into sharp relief. Schenker's invective works in several ways to engage this idea: (i) as a kind of space clearing – a symptom no doubt of the professional exclusion of Schenker from institutional music scholarship and his continued failure to secure an academic post – by distancing himself from commonplace flawed practice; (ii) as a call for the return of the repressed past – a past now sullied by the mediocrity of the moronic crowd, a past that stands in striking contrast to the banality of contemporary urban (vernacular) culture – in which the patrilineal order of the male genius is to be reinstated; (iii) as professional individuation, articulating the fundamental differences between himself and the vacuous chatterers that populate the universities and *Hochschulen*; (iv) as part of a shared tradition of invective, operating in a local cultural currency, following local conventions; and (v) as a form of (gender and culture) nostalgia – wistful, despondent, despairing of the decedent Now.

In the context of, for example, Freud's theorization of the superego, it comes as no surprise to note that Schenker's particular form of invective sometimes takes on the characteristics of a discursive confrontation that is ranged along the porous membrane that separates ideology and enjoyment, where anxieties about the dissolution of genius into that dubious collective pleasure that comes from transgressing Freud's pleasure principle drives the neurotic particularity of his writing practice.[19] This particularity, then, finds intense and continuous expression

of inner distance and do not truly identify with the "spirit of community".' Slavoj Žižek, 'Superego by default', in *Metastases of Enjoyment* (London: Verso, 1994), 54.

[19] For Freud, the subject can only bear so much enjoyment, and to experience too much enjoyment is to experience pain (as Lacan would put it, 'jouissance is suffering'), but that pain is nonetheless pleasurable for the subject. Freud, *Jenseits des Lustprinzips* [1920], *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), vol. 13, 1–69. Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar. Book VII. The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959–60* (trans.) Dennis Porter (London: Routledge, 1992), 184.

in a process of structural distancing, in the urge to mark the authorial position out from that of contemporaries by extensive recourse to the structural trope of the asymmetrical binarism. It is possible to recognize in Schenker, to be sure, an intensive contemporaneity in his writing that draws on the cultural tropes that also run through Freud's work: anxieties about loss, degeneracy and the rabble in his writing find expression in particularly excessive recourse to images of impotence, a 'phallicised' discourse that would not be out of place in the sermons of Nietzsche's Zarathustra:

> The world, to be sure, is completely unaware of this deplorable state of affairs; people continue to intoxicate themselves with grand slogans and pompous phrases. They speak emphatically of the "twentieth century" and of "progress"; they ecstatically praise the *Zeitgeist* and the "modern", and see an abundance of "geniuses" on all sides: "genius"-composers, "genius"-conductors, "genius"-performers. All without the slightest notion of how little such ecstasy can be reconciled with the talk that soon follows once again about "sterility" of the present, about "stagnancy of production", and even about waning artistic potency. Heaven knows how the world manages to rhyme "rise" with "fall"![20]

We shall return again to the prefaces of *Counterpoint I* and *II* shortly, but it is worth noting for now that, for both Freud and Schenker, transgressive enjoyment is intensified when experienced by a group, hence the tendency in psychoanalysis to figure enjoyment as something often held at the level of community and, as we have seen, the ritual nature of transgression is one symptom of that communitarian logic. For Schenker, the 'ecstasy', the 'intoxication' of grand slogans, as he figures it, and which he so summarily dismisses, is a marker of a banal and communitarian herd-instinct that generates a state of ignorance. Moreover, Schenker seeks out a place where truths circulate in isolation from pleasure, radically separated from that degenerate sphere; this is a truth that articulates itself in the public rational domain, presenting itself as grounded, sited, solid. Note here his God-like command of the public discursive space at the opening of *Counterpoint I*, 'We stand before a

[20] Heinrich Schenker, *Counterpoint I* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1987), xvii. 'Noch ist sich freilich die Welt dieser allertrübsten Situation durchaus nicht bewußt, noch berauscht man sich an großen Worten, an hochtönenden Phrasen. Man spricht mit Emphase vom "XX. Jahrhundert", vom "Fortschritt"; verzückt preist man den "Zeitgeist", das "Moderne" und sieht in Hülle und Fülle "Genies" ringsumher: "geniale" Komponisten, "geniale" Dirigenten, "geniale" Virtuosen. Das alles tut man, ohne im geringsten zu ahnen, wie wenig mit all diesen Verzückungen es im Grunde vereinbar ist, wenn bald darauf gar wieder von einer "Sterilität" der Gegenwart, von einem "Stillstehen der Produktion", ja von einem Nachlassen aller künstlerischen Potenzen u. s. w. gesprochen wird. Weiß der Himmel, wie es die liebe Welt fertig bringt, "Aufschwung" und "Niedergang" zu reimen!' Heinrich Schenker, *Kontrapunkt I* (Leipzig: Universal Edition, 1910), vii. Translation based on that by John Rothgeb, *Heinrich Schenker, Counterpoint I* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1987), xvii. Translation modified.

Herculaneum and Pompeii of music!'[21] When the pleasure ('ecstasy') of the rabble inappropriately enters the proper assessment of musical culture (when 'forbidden' recourse to pleasure is made, calling on the register of the superego), then the operative coherence of the privileged site from which one proclaims the taxonomy of the world seems to come under threat and a zombie-like acquiescence to the new takes hold: it is as if, for Schenker, when pleasure enters the frame, masculinity loses itself in a *communal* suffering/pleasure, a *compulsion* or *spasm*, a delight in consumption of the new instead of the quiet solemn reflection on the self-evident greatness of the canon: 'In all corners of the earth and at all times, masses have been nothing but an eternal slumberer, a humus that is coloured differently in different places only for climactic reasons'.[22] The tone of Schenker's invective in the preface from *Counterpoint I*, marked especially by the phrase 'waning artistic potency' and, in the above extract, by the aristocratic figuration of the 'masses' as a malleable 'humus', sets in place an exaggerated Oedipal logic, with Schenker playing a Laius to the (impotent) Oedipus-Other of the younger men who seek to usurp his cultural traditions, his beloved canon.

If we can say that the scholarly denigration of other scholars is structurally resonant with the psychic register of the superego, the 'dark law' so devastatingly articulated by Žižek,[23] then invective and reputation (de)formation are resolutely attached, at this moment and in this place, to a shared articulation of *enjoyment*, and it is this insight which gives Schenker's prose such a charge: 'It is a thought foreign to [the dilettante] that the true measure of culture is *not represented by enjoyment* but solely by the *creation of an art-work*'.[24] The complex problematic that Schenker faces (and which both 'Old' and 'New' musicologies alike continue to try to negotiate) is precisely this: how to determine what the nature, scope and operative potency of the relationship between covert (collectivizing) enjoyment and bourgeois elite masculinity might be. The traps are as well known to contemporary scholarship as they were to Schenker: on the one side, there is a cold de-subjectifying Puritanism and, on the other, a wallowing in subjectivism, the one an ensnarement in ego-rationality, the other in superego-enjoyment.[25] Schenker's invective is an attempt to negotiate this narrow passage, to find ways of refusing what he saw as a new cultural relativism and a dilettantism:

[21] 'Wir stehen vor einem Herkulaneum und Pomeji der Musik!', *Kontrapunkt I*, vii; *Counterpoint I*, xvii.

[22] 'Unter allen Himmelstrichen and zu allen Zeiten bleibt sie der gleiche Ewigkeitsschläfer, ein bloß aus klimatischen Gründen überall anders verfärbte Humus.' *Kontrapunkt II*, vii; *Counterpoint II*, xviii.

[23] Žižek, *Metastases*, 54–85.

[24] 'Ist ihm doch auch selbst der Gedanke noch fremd, daß den wahren Gradmesser der Kultur ja beiliebe nicht das Geniessen, sondern einzig und allein das Schaffen eines Kunstwerkes vorstellt!' *Kontrapunkt I*, xii, *Counterpoint I*, xix. My italics.

[25] The cold/warm binarism here is something noted also by Cook, *Project*, 178.

> We live in an era in which all values in human relationships are turned exactly upside down … Does not a newly created work of art have greater significance than the enjoyment of a whole nation? What is accomplished by the dilettante's stubborn and arrogant insistence on his perception and his opinion?[26]

Readers familiar with the first fragment in this quotation will no doubt be perplexed at the omission of the infamous misogynist outburst that follows it. I shall return to that passage in the final section of this chapter, but here I want to concentrate on the binarism as Schenker sets it up: resonant of what Nietzsche characterized as the *Umwertung aller Werte* or 'revaluation of all values', the misanthropy of this passage finds a fascinating later support (before the completion of second volume of *Counterpoint*) in a diary entry from June 1919:

> I rescue myself from the German misery in the pure world of counterpoint and spend many happy hours in the company of Nietzsche and Kirkegaard and see again with horror how monstrously correct these illustrious spirits are, together with Schopenhauer and other greats, in their judgement of human nature.[27]

Counterpoint, then, is Schenker's *garden*. In this misanthropy, Schenker articulates something of his predicament, besieged by a tide of democratization that sanctions what he understands to be a 'pandering' to the popular, and this misanthropy finds expression in a consistent mistrust of the collective and of anything that smacks of a challenge to his conservative bourgeois values: we must undoubtedly be prepared to contextualize part of the motivation for this almost aristocratic misanthropy in the rise of Karl Lueger's anti-Semitic Christian Social Party that, on reducing taxes, raised many of the lower middle class 'kleine Männer' into the income bracket that allowed them to vote. Their petty anti-Semitism and disdain for bourgeois 'High' culture was pandered to by Lueger, and his Christian Social Party remained a major political force in Vienna up until the First World War. This intimate connection of populism to anti-Semitism would undoubtedly have coloured Schenker's views on the collective, but it is useful nonetheless to recognize that invective is a *symptom* (in the Lacanian sense) of a particular operation of language that has been termed *phallogocentric* and which, in the Viennese context, is sanctioned by the logic of gender nostalgia we outlined at the beginning of this chapter.

This characterization follows from the observation, made most explicitly by Jacques Derrida in his critique of Lacan's seminar on Poe,[28] that Western

[26] Schenker, *Counterpoint I*, xix.

[27] Diary entry, 11 June 1919 reprinted in Hellmut Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker: Nach Tagebüchern und Briefen in der Oswald Jonas Memorial Collection* (Hildesheim: Olms Verlag, 1985), 89. My translation.

[28] Jacques Derrida [1975], 'Le facteur de la vérité', in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago, IL: Johns Hopkins University Press,

epistemology is characterized by its tendency to conceive of the world through the medium of a language that is thoroughly misogynistic. A conflation of 'phallo-' and 'logo-centrism', this term designates the 'old and enormous root' that characterizes our use of language: 'the "description" is a "participation" when it induces a practice, an ethics, an institution, and therefore a politics that ensure the truth of the tradition'.[29] As a critical category, phallogocentrism no doubt has tremendous force, but the problem with it has been that the kinds of critical force to which one can put it have tended to be rather abstract, or analytically unwieldy. However, when read through the localized, *historical* specifics of *fin-de-siècle* Viennese gender nostalgia, the phallogocentric quality of invective takes on a less abstracted, less universalized quality and comes into focus as doing much more particular and localized cultural work. In short, to say merely that musical discourse is phallogocentric is like (but not exactly equivalent to) saying simply that there is power at work in discourse. This observation is worth making, but how can one get it do useful elucidatory work? To think of Schenker as in some way historicized is a useful tactic here in trying to do such work: the main purpose of that thinking would be to enable scrutiny of the relationship between Schenker and his contemporaries by concentrating on the structures of Schenker's authorial subjectivity as a symptom of more widespread cultural practices (posing the question, that is, as to how Schenker is contemporaneous to his time). Yet, as we have already noted, that historicism has also constituted the chief mechanism by which the Anglophone apologia for Schenker has been perpetrated.

Schenker's Modernity

For me, what makes the questioning of the ground of Schenker's use of invective so seductive is both the inevitable implication of that examination in the current scholarly predicament and, for our purposes here, the opportunity it affords us to think about how texts on music work to make their effects, to structure their own reception. In short, texts about music from this Viennese long *fin de siècle* tend to operate according to a set of discursive conventions that, in some way, already construe their reading audience; that is, they are written in ways which articulate and circumscribe their own readership. I am reminded here of the strange and seductive work of the Italian Germanist Massimo Cacciari whose *Dallo Steinhof*, translated into English as *Posthumous People*,[30] opens with Nietzsche's famous Maxim: 'It is only after death that we will enter *our* life and come alive, oh,

1987), 439, 465, 478 and 481n. Jacques Lacan, *Écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), 11–41; 'Seminar on the Purloined Letter', trans. by Jeffrey Mehlman, *Yale French Studies* 48 (1972), 39–72.

[29] Derrida, *Post Card*, 481n.

[30] Massimo Cacciari, *Posthumous People: Vienna at the Turning Point*, trans. by Rodger Friedman (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).

very much alive, we posthumous people!'[31] Nietzsche's textual projection of himself into a community of readers after his death touches on a ubiquitous process that had been under way in the Habsburg lands since the 1850s – the careful reorganization of education around homogenized standards of reading, the building of strong bourgeois reading communities and an immersion of students into tradition as a key element of state-sponsored education.[32] Cacciari's complex but beautiful account of the intellectual and artistic world of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna points in essence to the observation, metaphorically cast from the Steinhof (a hill above the metropolis on which stands the church of Sankt Leopold designed by Otto Wagner), that tradition and innovation are here ranged against each other, in productive but deadly conflict:

> The symmetrical, repetitive rhythm is accentuated from the outside by a revetment of thin marble blocks. The iron clamps and bolts that keep them in place, rimmed with copper leaf borders, give a sense of motion to these walls, yet without any monumental emphasis and without any concession to ornament. Inside, the building's perfect measure of basic forms is joined, without contrast, by the multicoloured clarity of light that streams through the stained glass windows. Here is the meeting, never realized so well, of the principles of tradition and quotation on the one hand and the *Nervenleben* ['neural life'] of the Secession Movement's images and colour on the other.[33]

What better articulation of Schenker's predicament than this, as located at the 'meeting' of the two sides of a Viennese malaise in which, as William M. Johnston puts it '[p]recisely because it transmitted traditional skills, Austrian education equipped its alumni to supplant what they had inherited.'[34]

Schenker's output is, as we have so far only been able to intimate, dominated by invective (what he termed his *Polemik*) and yet, what marks his work out from that of, say, Kretzschmar, Riemann, Kurth or Adler, is not the invective *per se* (Schenker was not alone in his dismay at the democratization of culture), but its consistent 'outsider' quality. In its commitment to a view of culture in which the *Tonraum* of the composer/author predestines its reception and which, most importantly, thereby obviates the need for 'translation', Schenker is a radical.[35]

[31] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science. With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 365. Quoted in Cacciari, *People*, xv.

[32] William M. Johnston, *The Austrian Mind: An Intellectual and Social History, 1848–1938* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972), 66–73.

[33] Cacciari, *People*, 2.

[34] Johnston, *Mind*, 73.

[35] See Barbara Whittle, 'The cultural context of the theories of Heinrich Schenker', PhD thesis, Open University (1993), 77. Whittle rightly articulates the position of Schenker *vis-à-vis* his predecessors as one marked by a consistent desire to simplify their work. The 'irony' as Whittle puts it is that he does go some way to achieving this by drawing on

Here is where we can locate the keen modernity of Schenker's project: the use of non-musical imagery as a 'translation' of musical material is something which Schenker repeatedly railed against, and for him that populist practice was a marker of a deep-seated malaise. We see this in particular in the magnificent and deeply flawed Monograph on Beethoven's Ninth (1912), written between the two *Counterpoint* volumes, where Schenker turns on Hermann Kretzschmar's analysis of the Ninth in the latter's extraordinarily popular *Führer durch den Konzertsal* (1898):

> Kretzschmar would undoubtedly have fared better if, instead of the plethora of words – "brief moment", "happy frolic", "elements of weary longing", "stifled", "cheered on", "forceful strokes" – he had, while maintaining the same brevity, provided concepts of truly orientational value, such as "modulatory theme", "second theme", and so forth. But what can one expect …[36]

In a refusal of 'translation' or figuration, Schenker tries to find ways of discoursing about musical materials that pay attention to their medial *specificity*. For Friedrich Kittler, as we have seen, this is a critical qualitative operator of the 1900 *Aufschreibesystem* or 'discourse network', that a 'message', when carried from one medium to another in this network, is *always* transformed, evidencing a new logic of media [*Medienlogik*]. For Schenker, the kinds of translational practice that characterize Kretzschmar's work are a source of its ultimate banality: the appeal to figures, to an imagery that draws on tired conceptions of musical semiosis, is an appeal to a debased populist discourse and, crucially, an appeal to a collective error, an error on which the decline of the common practice is grounded.

This crucial characteristic of Schenker's writings, their tendency to consistently *address* the community of reader–scholars in both explicit and implicit ways as dangerously susceptible to a false consciousness, which he often reduced simply to the consciousness of a collective spirit, is also grounded in an acutely contemporaneous struggle for professional assuredness. Addresses such as these to an imagined audience invariably draw on a set of epistemological 'technologies' that mark the author as the exemplary outsider by demonstrating that he alone has the insight to insist consistently on the particularity of music's 'mediality', on the specific nature of music's material existence. Moreover, these 'technologies' undoubtedly include, as we have already seen, the discursive practices of philology, phenomenology, psychology and other epistemological

the 'reductive programme' of the rationalist theorists. Schenker's term *Tonraum* resonates strongly with the phenomenological ideas of his day. Its seems that he views this 'space' as the space in which the composer has room to play, in which the will can be enacted, constrained only by the ontological limits of the materials themselves.

[36] Heinrich Schenker, *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony: A Portrayal of Its Musical Content, with Running Commentary on Performance and Literature as Well*, trans. and ed. by John Rothgeb (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 159.

allegiances which we might bracket under some 'scientific' orientation (although the Anglo-American reception of Schenker as 'empiricist' has tended to block out his atavistic rhetoric in favour of a rather sanitized 'scientized' Schenker), but they also include an array of strategies that we might bracket under the term 'polemic': the exemplary positioning of the authorial *Ich*; the imagery of decline; the poisoned and poisoning rabble; the traumatic *Durchbruch* of the Other (whether the internal German collective or the external collective of the victorious allies after 1918); the incompetent vanity of other theorists in comparison with the carefully detailed work of Schenker. In short, the taxonomy of Others in Schenker's writings appeals to a logic that overlaps with that of gender nostalgia to a considerable extent: textual authority, figurative authorial 'strength', uprightness, moral and intellectual superiority and a firm grasp of the public arena. This is the crudely and rigidly gendered ground of Schenker's modernity.

Schenker's insistence on the *mediality* of music, on the medium-specific operations of musical materials, then, is invariably accompanied in his texts by a rhetorical casting of the Other(s) (and others) in music scholarship as an ignorant but dangerous rabble, crippled by their false collective consciousness. The appeal to collectivity as a site of decline resonates with debates on the nature and scope of individuality at the *fin de siècle* and, as we have seen, is particularly coloured by the new professionalizing claims of scholarship in the context of the new empirical sciences. An understanding of how Viennese *fin-de-siècle* men of the *Gelehrtenstand* would have understood collectivity and professional competence, how they would have negotiated the tensions between the pressure to conform to social (communal) norms on the one hand with a pressure to stride out and take control of one's own immediate environment on the other (how to reconcile, that is, communitarian with individualistic models of masculinity) is thus crucial to both a proper contextualization of Schenker's rhetorical practice and its thoroughgoing critique.

Schenker in the Crowd: *Fin-de-siècle* Discourses on Collectivity and Individuality

To be sure, a great deal of intellectual effort was expended at the long *fin de siècle* by Schenker's contemporaries in attempting to address the tension between individuality and collectivity, forming a deep-lying and culturally ubiquitous neurotic 'question' (in the Lacanian sense) for the various discourses on character and personality. Lacan was to characterize this, some 50 years later in his famous theorization of neurosis [*névrose*], as 'a question that being poses for the subject'.[37] Friedrich Nietzsche, for whom the metropolis was the home of the

[37] *Écrits. A Selection*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock Publications, 1977), 168. Lacan further elaborates that 'question' in book 3 of the *Seminar* by determining two kinds of content, the one centred around gender, the other around death: 'Am I a man or a

over-intellectualizing rabble, repeatedly articulated his attitude to collectivity by casting the collective in the role of a mediocre selfish rabble, in radical contrast to the productive self-sufficiency of the exemplary masculine self, especially in his demanding, self-contradictory and much misunderstood doctrine of the *Übermensch*. In *Also sprach Zarathustra* (1883–1885), he casts the rabble in three roles: the power-rabble ['Macht-Gesindel'], hungry for power; the scribbling rabble ['Schreib-Gesindel'], an over-intellectualizing and self-analytical group; and the pleasure rabble ['Lust-Gesindel'], lost in the pleasure of the body and consumption. The individualistic critique of collectivity is ventriloquized by Zarathustra:

> Life is a well-spring of pleasure [*Lust*]; but wherever the rabble drinks, all wells are poisoned./I incline to all things cleanly; but I do not love to see the gaping mouths and the thirst of the unclean.[38]

The desire of Zarathustra to extricate himself from the rabble is articulated in his climbing up out of the 'lowlands' ['Niederungen'] to the lonely heights of the mountaintops where the ecstasy of insight is afforded the prophet:

> Oh, I have found it my brothers! Here in the highest the fountain of pleasure [*Lust*] gushes towards me! A life pours forth from which no rabble drinks. Almost too violently you flow to me, fountain of pleasure! And often you empty the cup again, even whilst filling it![39]

By marking individuated 'insight' as a kind of ecstasy, Nietzsche deliberately reverses the Freudian logic of the pleasure principle, but does so in ways that nonetheless uphold its alteritous logic of self/Other(s). The reversal by no means challenges the contemporaneity of either position, but points up the outer structure of the debate, articulating the currency of the pleasure/reason dichotomy. Nietzsche's position was by no means unique and his counter-argument to Schopenhauer's earlier bleak vision of the *principium individuationis* speaks of a particular logic of the self that finds expression in both empirical and non-empirical *Wissenschaften* in which collectivity figures as a site of *contagion*

woman?' and 'To be or not to be?' (*The Seminar. Book III. The Psychoses, 1955–56* (trans.) Russell Grigg (London: Routledge, 1993), 174, 190.) The first structures the neurosis of hysteria; the second articulates obsessional neurosis (Freud's Zwangsneurose).

[38] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (trans.) A. Little (London: Dent, 1933), 87. Translation modified. 'Das Leben ist ein Born der Lust; aber wo das Gesindel mit trinkt, da sind alle Brunnen vergiftet./Allem Reinlichen bin ich hold; aber mag ich die grinsenden Mäuler nicht sehn und den Durst der Unreinen.' *Also sprach Zararthustra: Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen. Nietzsche's Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, volume 6 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968), 120.

[39] Ibid., 121. My translation.

– the rabble is a dangerous, brutal and mindless mass and the great unwashed are bearers of disease, 'poisoners' as Nietzsche put it, besmirchers of the great German(-language) cultural traditions of the Masters, as Schenker would put it.

In 1895, Gustave Le Bon published his *Psychologie des foules* (Psychology of the crowd) in which he characterizes the collective mind as mediocre, anonymizing and intellectually stultifying:

> This very fact that crowds possess in common ordinary qualities explains why they can never accomplish acts demanding a high degree of intelligence. The decisions affecting matters of general interest come to by an assembly of men of distinction, but specialists in different walks of life, are not sensibly superior to the decisions that would be adopted by a gathering of imbeciles. The truth is, they can only bring to bear in common on work in hand those mediocre qualities which are the birthright of every average individual. In crowds it is stupidity and not mother-wit that is accumulated.[40]

For Le Bon, crowds represent the worst of the metropolitan imagination, its most base and anonymizing appeal to *la bêtise*, nonsense. In the crowd, the (male) individual succumbs to instinct and gives up that which he is able to 'control' in other contexts:

> Different causes determine the appearance of these characteristics peculiar to crowds, and not possessed by isolated individuals. The first is that the individual forming part of a crowd acquires, solely from numerical considerations, a sentiment of invincible power which allows him to yield to instincts which, had he been alone, he would perforce have kept under restraint. He will be the less disposed to check himself from the consideration that, a crowd being anonymous, and in consequence irresponsible, the sentiment of responsibility which always controls individuals disappears entirely.[41]

[40] Gustave le Bon, 'The mind of crowds' (trans.) not cited, in Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst (eds), *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 55–61: 60. 'C'est justement cette mise en commun de qualités ordinaires qui nous explique pourquoi les foules ne sauraient jamais accomplir d'actes exigeant une intelligence élevée. Les décisions d'intérêt général prises par une assemblée d'hommes distingués, mais de spécialités différentes, ne sont pas sensiblement supérieures aux décisions que prendrait une réunion d'imbéciles. Ils ne peuvent mettre en commun en effet que ces qualités c'est la bêtise et non l'esprit, qui s'accumule.' *Psychologie des foules* (Paris: Félix Alcan [1895] 1907), 17.

[41] Le Bon, in Ledger and Luckhurst, *Reader*, 58. 'Diverses causes déterminent l'apparition de ces caractères spéciaux aux foules, et que les individu en foule acquiert, par le fait seul du nombre, un sentiment de puissance invincible qui lui permet de céder à des instincts que, seul, il eût forcément refrénés. Il sera d'autant moins porté à les refréner que, la foule étant anonyme, et par conséquent irresponsable, le sentiment de la responsabilité, qui retient toujours les individus, disparaît entièrement.' Le Bon, *Psychologie*, 18.

It will come as no surprise, in the light of what we have so far gleaned about the nature of the rabble in the *fin-de-siècle* bourgeois consciousness, to note that Le Bon stresses the potential for what he terms a contagion [*la contagion*] in the crowd, recalling Nietzsche's articulation of the rabble as poisoners of the well of culture:

> The second cause, which is contagion, also intervenes to determine the manifestation in crowds of their special characteristics, and at the same time the trend they are to take. Contagion is a phenomenon of which it is easy to establish the presence, but that it is not easy to explain. It must be classed among those phenomena of a hypnotic order, which we shall shortly study. In a crowd every sentiment and act is contagious to such a degree that an individual readily sacrifices his personal interest to the collective interest. This is an attitude very contrary to his nature, and of which a man is scarcely capable, except when he makes part of a crowd.[42]

In the light of the vogue for hypnotism, an interest that Le Bon shared with Freud,[43] the articulation of a third characteristic of the crowd, suggestibility [*la suggestibilité*], draws explicitly on current popular-medical discourses on the unconscious:

> A third cause, and by far the most important, determines in the individuals of a crowd special characteristics which are quite contrary at times to those presented by the isolated individual. I allude to that suggestibility of which, moreover, the contagion mentioned is neither more nor less than an effect.[44]

[42] Le Bon, in Ledger and Luckhurst, *Reader*, 59. 'Une seconde cause, la contagion, intervient également pour déterminer chez les foules la manifestation de caractères spéciaux et en même temps leur orientation. La contagion est un phénomène aisé à constater, mais non explique, et qu'il faut rattacher aux phénomènes d'ordre hypnotique que nous étudierons dans un instant. Dans une foule, tout sentiment, tout acte est contagieux à ce point que l'individu sacrifice très facilement son intérêt personnel a l'intérêt collectif. C'est la une aptitude fort contraire à sa nature, et dont l'homme n'est guère capable que lorsqu'il fait partie d'une foule.' Le Bon, *Psychologie*, 18.

[43] See the short assessment of hypnosis as a potential therapeutic medium in Freud, 'Versuch, die Taubstumme zu bessern und die Erfrolge dieser Versuche', *Berliner klinische Wochenschrift* 6 (1887), 96. See also 'Hypnose', in Anton Bum (ed.), *Therapeutisches Lexikon* (Vienna, 1891) available in *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), Nachträge [appendices], 141–150; The text of a two-part lecture by Freud given in the Wienerischer Medizinischer Klub in 1892 was reproduced in the *Internationaler klinischer Rundschau*, 6 (1892), 814–818, 853–856. See *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987) Nachträge [appendices], 165–178.

[44] Le Bon, in Ledger and Luckhurst, *Reader*, 59. 'Une troisième cause, et celle-là est de beaucoup la plus importante, détermine dans les individus en foule des caractères spéciaux parfois tout à fait contraires à ceux de l'individu isolé. Je veux parler de la

Le Bon's text was well known in the German-speaking world and Freud quoted extensively from the second German edition translated by Rudolf Eisler in his 1921 *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse*.[45]

An interesting counterpoint to Le Bon's anti-collectivism can be found in the work of German sociologist Georg Simmel, for whom the metropolis poses a mental *problem*, but for whom the collective need not bring about a debasement of the intellect. Indeed, for him it is precisely the peculiar nature of metropolitan *individuation* that brings about the woes of metropolitan man:

> The deepest problems of modern life flow from the attempt of the individual to maintain the independence and individuality of his existence against the sovereign powers of society, against the weight of the historical heritage and the external culture and technique of life.[46]

Simmel's central point, not unlike that in Freud's work on neurosis, is that the metropolis brings about a form of individuation that is somehow removed from the 'depths of the personality'.[47] The atavistic elements of Simmel's argument are clear (especially in his appeal to a 'lost' universal 'personality'), but he also points to a material dimension in the personality of the metropolitan that is grounded in a profound *alienation*:

> What is essential here as regards the economic–psychological aspect of the problem is that in less advanced cultures production was for the customer who ordered the product so that the producer and the purchaser knew one another. The modern city, however, is supplied almost exclusively by production for the market, that is, for entirely unknown purchasers who never appear in the actual field of vision of the producers themselves … The necessity to specialise one's product in order to find a source of income which is not yet exhausted and also to specialise a function which cannot be easily supplanted is conducive to differentiation, refinement and enrichment of the needs of the public which must lead to increasing personal variation within this public.[48]

suggestibilité, dont la contagion mentionnée plus haut n'est d'ailleurs qu'un effet.' Le Bon, *Psychologie*, 18.

[45] Freud, *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse* (1921), *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 13, 71–161. The edition used here is the Studienausgabe: *Fragen der Geellschaft. Ursprünge der Religion. Studeinausgabe*, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1975), 65–134.

[46] Georg Simmel, 'The Metropolis and Mental Life' (1903), in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, trans. and ed. by Kurt Wolff (New York: Free Press, 1950), 409–424; available in Ledger and Luckhurst, *Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 61.

[47] Ibid., 62.

[48] Ibid., 62–63.

The notion of alienation, taken over no doubt from, amongst others, the Marx of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844), has both a structured economic 'cause' and an internal emotional (or, in Freud's terms, 'psychical') dimension:

> Where quantitative increase of value and energy has reached its limits, one seizes on qualitative distinctions, so that, through taking advantage of the existing sensitivity to differences, the attention of the social world can, in some way, be won for itself. This leads ultimately to the strangest eccentricities, to specifically metropolitan extravagances of self-distanciation, of caprice, of fastidiousness, the meaning of which is no longer to be found in the content of such activity itself but rather in its being a form of being different; of making oneself noticeable.[49]

The 'self-distanciation' of the individual thus leads for Simmel to a set of communicative practices that insist on a 'to-the-pointness', a mode of communication that is subservient to the needs of *Verkehr* ('traffic,' in the sense of 'business'): this brings a self-obsessed discourse into the frame insisting resolutely on the staging of the ego as a *drama* for the consumption of others:

> For many types of persons these are still the only means of saving for oneself, through the attention gained from others, some sort of self-esteem and the sense of filling a position. In the same sense there operates an apparently insignificant factor which in its effects, however, is perceptibly cumulative, namely, the brevity and rarity of meetings which are allotted to each individual as compared with the social intercourse in a small city [/town]. For here we find the attempt to appear to-the-point, clear-cut and individual with extraordinary greater frequency that where frequent and long association assures to each person an unambiguous conception of the other's personality.[50]

The individuation that is effected by metropolitan life is thus characterized for Simmel by its attention to its own resources, its reliance on practices of self-reflection and intellectual interiority. In this context, the Freudian revolution begins to look like a symptom of the metropolitan age where anxieties about one's encounter with Other(s) take on internalized lives of their own, and make themselves felt in a multitude of formative mental ills, not least of which is neurosis, that most urban of mental ills.

Freud was certainly intimately familiar with Le Bon's text and offered a generally positive assessment of it in his 1920 *Massenpsychologie*, his most extended study of collective psychology. For Freud, as for many Viennese intellectuals at the long Viennese *fin de siècle*, the tensions between individuality and collectivity are crucial operators of the metropolitan imagination and that tension, whilst certainly

[49] Ibid., 65.

[50] Ibid., 65.

addressed by Freud in his theorization of ego and superego, is also addressed in a much more textured (or even empirical) fashion in some of the case studies and in his earlier writings on neurosis. A particularly powerful exemplification of the way Freud attempts to negotiate a path through the duality of self/Other (or ego and superego as he later articulated it), and a field of psychoanalysis that was well known to the Viennese reading public, is his theorization of neurosis, to which Lacan turned much of his analytical attention in the 1950s; it offers an insight into a particular discursive attitude to the self that dominated public discourses on personality at this *fin de siècle*. Encountered in a systematic examination in Freud's work as early as 1896,[51] the term neurosis [*Neurose*] is not Freud's, but already had a common psychoanalytic and psychiatric currency by the time Freud published his earliest works in the 1870s. Freud's use of the term undergoes some profound changes, and it passes through several articulations, from a general term for mental illness through to a quite specific set of conditions, specifically opposed to psychosis.[52] In all these articulations, Freud attempts over and over to catalogue the neuroses into types, drawing on the case studies and on writings already known to him.[53]

In an early attempt at articulating the forms and effects of neurosis, Freud identifies what he terms 'Gewissensangst', variously translated as 'moral anxiety' or 'conscience anxiety', as a symptom of *Angstneurose*.[54] This sub-category is accompanied by a tendency in the patient to over-fastidiousness, an obsessive attention to detail and a pedantic inclination, recognized later in the famous case study of the 'wolf man', symptoms which all resonate with Simmel's 'diagnosis'

[51] Freud, 'L'hérédité et l'étiologie des névroses', *Revue Neurologique*, 4 (1896), 161–169. In German: 'Zur Erbe und Ätiologie der Neurosen', *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 1, 407–422.

[52] On psychosis, see Freud, 'Die Abwehr-Neuropsychosen. Versuch einer psychologischen Theorie der acquirierten Hysterie, vieler Phobien und Zwangsvorstellungen und gewisser hallucinatorischer Psychosen', *Neurlogoisches Zentralblatt* 13 (1894), 362–364 and 402–409; 'Weitere Bemerkungen über die Abwehr-Neuropsychosen', *Neurlogoisches Zentralblatt* 15 (1896), 434–448; 'Neurose und Psychose', *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse* 10 (1924), 1–5; 'Der Realitätverlust bei Neurose und Psychose', *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse* 10 (1924), 374–379. This last work appeared first in English, translated by Joan Riviere under the title 'The loss of reality in neurosis and psychosis', in Sigmund Freud, *Collected Papers*, volume 2, ed. by Joan Riviere (London: The Hogarth Press, 1924), 277–282.

[53] These include: Wilhelm Fliess, *Neue Beiträge und Therapie der nasalen Reflexneurose* (Vienna, 1892); H. Kaan, *Der neurasthenische Angstaffekt bei Zwangsvorstellungen und der promordiale Grübelzwang* (Vienna, 1893); L. Löwenfeld, *Patholgie und Therapie der Neurasthenie und Hysterie* (Wiesbaden, 1893).

[54] 'Über die Berechtigung, von der Neurasthenie einen bestimmten Symptomkomplex als "Angstneurose" abzutrennen', *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 1, 315–342.

of the ills of metropolitan man.[55] Completed in 1914, the case of the wolf man has generated a tremendous amount of comment and is perhaps Freud's most extended study of masculinity, focusing in particular on male hysteria, which he figures here as a type of neurosis. In the much earlier 'Über die Berechtigung, von der Neurasthenie einen bestimmten Symptomkomplex als "Angstneurose" abzutrennen' ['On the justification for detaching a particular syndrome from neurasthenia under the description "anxiety neurosis"'] (1898),[56] Freud also sketches out a gendered dimension to neurosis: anxiety neurosis occurs in women who are virginal or adolescent, newly married, sexually unsatisfied by their husbands (because of *ejaculatio praecox* or impaired potency), widows or the *climacteric* (for whom the orgasm is a site of anxiety); in men, it works in those who are abstinent, unconsummated, in those who practise *coitus interruptus,* or the *sensecent* (for whom increasing libido is accompanied by decreasing potency). On both sides of the gender divide, anxiety neurosis is imagined as a disorder that finds its expression in commensurate sexual and gender disorders, especially in either extremely heightened desire and/or curtailed sexual ability. The compulsory heterosexuality of this theorization also points to a crucial quality of Freud's theory of neurosis, even in this early articulation: neurosis can be imagined as an intensification of 'everyday' anxieties or experiences, which are transformed into neuroses because the analysand attaches a significance to a traumatic or foundational moment, taking external stimuli and internalizing them. In this sense, neurosis (especially anxiety neurosis) works at the intersection of the social and sexual, where socially held assumptions are implicated in individually experienced mismatches between those assumptions and sexual experience (or lack of it).

The social dimension is only present by implication in these early ruminations by Freud, but what impresses itself across the vast output from these early works through the 'wolf man' case to *Civilisation and its Discontents* (1930)[57] is the powerfully socializing implication of the Freudian discourse of the self: the self's predicament is its *social* predicament, the acculturation of that self as its ultimate goal, its self-sufficiency is in doubt, its implication in a shared cultural narrative is overwhelming.[58] What also impresses itself is the extent to which the male psyche's predicament serves as an *exemplar* for a universalized psyche, generating a set of gendered expectations of 'normality'. That putative normality is fragile and, more

[55] 'Aus der Geschichte einer infantilen Neurose' [1914], *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 12, 27–157.

[56] Freud, 'Berechtigung'.

[57] *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur, Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 13, 419–506.

[58] For an eloquent, but ultimately apologetic, account of Freud's contribution to the study of group dynamics, see Peter Gay, *Freud for Historians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 144–180.

importantly for our purposes, the 'burden' on the male of being exemplary brings with it quite specific maladies.[59]

Schenker's Burden

In Schenker, this 'burden' was not remarkable. Not remarkable, that is, if you were Jewish; not remarkable, that is, if you were a provincial rural Jew, a version, perhaps, of Simmel's 'deep personality', transplanted to the great Austro-German imperial metropolis.[60] Schenker's attachment to Judaism, as Barbara Whittle points out, was particularly intense and his outwardly assimilated 'urbane' character is matched by an inner orthodox devotion to his religion.[61] In the following chapter of this volume, we shall examine in some detail the impact of scientific racism on Gustav Mahler's self-image, as marked in particular by feminizing figurations of the Jewish male body as incomplete, or pathological. In the present chapter we could well have drawn on those very same materials to attempt to account for much of what is at work in Schenker's inner world, but I am concerned here more with the texture of the polemic against the 'decline' of the great tradition, and the 'rabble', a polemic which, as we have seen, draws explicitly on the resources of gender nostalgia and which had tremendous currency at the Viennese *fin de siècle*.[62]

[59] There is no doubt that we can use Freud differently, but we must also recognize that, for Freud, it is men who are bearers of discourse. Since this a book about men, I will not tarry here too long, other than to make it clear that Freud's attitude to women is complex and far from simplistically misogynistic. It is also clear, however, that the popular reception of Freud and the construction of the female hysteric in his wake is far from prohibited by his work.

[60] Born in 1868 in Wisniowczyk near Podhajce (Podgacy) in Galicia (in Ukrainian Halychyna, now in the Western Ukraine – part of the old Austro-German territory is also in Poland with the Polish name of Galicja), to middle-class German-speaking Jewish provincial parents, he attended the Gymnasium in Lemberg (Lviv in Ukrainian, Lwow in Polish) and completed his school education at the Gymnasium at Brzeżany (Berežhany). He attended Law school from 1884 and enrolled at the Hochschule für Musik und bildende Künste in 1887, taking harmony with Bruckner. He successfully completed his legal training in 1889 and remained in Vienna until his death in 1935 from diabetes. See Whittle, 'Context', 11. Whittle's thesis is, to date, probably the most comprehensive and reliable work on Schenker's historical context.

[61] Ibid., 14–15.

[62] This is not to deny the veracity of any claim that Schenker's writing is itself touched by his own experience of anti-Semitism, but to structure my reading of Schenker around the rather pragmatic demands of this volume. I shall thus refer to the racist contexts obliquely in order to leave room for that analysis in Chapter 4 of this volume. Whittle gives a detailed account of the kinds of events that would have touched Schenker and contributed to his devout attachment to Judaism. See Whittle, 'Context', 18. For more on Schenker's

The tone of Schenker's polemic is indelibly marked by its incubation in a music-scholarly tradition quite alien to our modern conception of *Musikwissenschaft* and in which the self-evident primacy of the 'professional' historico-analytic paradigm over more consumption-led 'amateur' models was by no means uncontested.[63] Schenker's attention to polemics – often accompanied, as we have seen, by a radicalizing ego-distanciation of the authorial 'I' from the work of its contemporaries – must thus also be understood in the context of an emergent 'professional' discourse on musical materials that still seemed precarious. The precarious state of musical discourse – and, no doubt, Schenker's professional exclusion from the institutions that might offer it some security – charges Schenker's polemic with a particularly characteristic intensity. Distanciation is certainly one of the markers of that intensity and can be seen to operate, in a 'strictly' (and, perhaps, slightly perverse) Freudian reading, according to an *obsessional-neurotic* logic: the urge to invective and distanciation in Schenker can be understood as an obsessive–neurotic *idée fixe* in so far as it responds to a 'trauma' and articulates a compulsion to invective. As a metropolitan practice grounded in the particularities of Austro-German debates about individuality and subjectivity, Schenker's invective is thoroughly commonplace.

In the preface of the *Harmonielehre* (1906), for example, Schenker is particularly keen to mark, yet again, his distanciation from his contemporaries:

> In contrast to other books on music theory, conceived, one might say, for their own sake and apart from art, the aim of this book is to build a real and practicable bridge from composition to theory. If this aim is good and worthwhile and if the way we chose to reach it is well chosen, this book should be self-explanatory, and the advantages of its approach should result clearly even without a prelude of diffuse preannouncements.[64]

The point for Schenker is to mark out a *territory* for himself, as the guardian of a tradition he feels is threatened by the banality of other approaches to the teaching of

animosity to hermeneutics, see also Robert Snarrenberg, *Schenker's Interpretative Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 3–7 and Leslie David Blasius, *Schenker's Argument and the Claims of Music Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 12, 71n, 75n, 101, 106n.

[63] As Whittle makes clear: 'In Schenker's youth, musical scholarship was not synonymous with a particular definition of musicology. Many of the problems of interpreting Schenker stem from the false assumption that what we now understand by musical scholarship is what has always been understood to be that, or that modes of study which did not conform to the musicological model were justly swept aside as essentially unscholarly.' Whittle, 'Context', 53–54.

[64] Heinrich Schenker, *Harmony*, trans. by Elisabeth Mann Borgese (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1954). A similar point is made in Blasius, *Argument*, 1–2 and Whittle, 'Context', 8.

harmony and counterpoint. Yet this territory is not bounded by a mission statement or any schematic statement of intent of the sort that characterizes reform primers of the later twentieth century: it is a territory slowly won by an accumulative (repetitive) unveiling of the ground of the common practice and a gradual emergence of the 'mission' from a *repetitive* action in which the ideal student grapples with the core features of the practice by slowly becoming familiar with its textures; this is evidenced in particular in a upward spiralling of the system over the same knowledge ground, taking each visitation to a higher level of familiarity. In *Harmonielehre*, although the course seems to outline a linear structure that unveils the discrete features of the common practice one by one, the author nonetheless pauses at several places in the manual to recap materials, to draw the reader's attention to pedagogical assumptions that have impacted detrimentally on the teaching of harmony and, in particular, to revisit again and again the features of the common practice *in situ*. Repetition thus emerges not from a deliberate strategy of reinforcement but from a desire to explicate tonal features by referring always to the materials of the common practice 'itself'.

The *idée fixe* of repetition and ego-distanciation, although it finds consistent expression in oscillating rhetorical practices, structured around a *diagnosis* → *cure* syllogism, is also a marker of Schenker's pragmatism. Hence the rhetorical strategy certainly finds syllogistic expression (critique of false system-closure → open-ended process; critique of harmonic theory → familiarity with the practice; critique of false contemporary culture → intimate knowledge of the past masters; and so on), but this expression is also a symptom of a particular view of the student as embedded in what we might term the empirical data web. In the opening gambit of the *Harmonielehre* quoted above, although Schenker is keen to articulate his place in the 'market', and complements this drumming up of custom in the third chapter of the *Harmonielehre* with a characteristically self-professionalizing diagnosis of the ills of current and recently defunct theorizations of harmony and, in particular, the maladies that have characterized its teaching, Schenker nonetheless does *not* offer an alternative 'rounded off' pedagogical model to those he seeks to critique, but critiques the very idea of a foreclosure and keeps open the possibility of a perpetual extension of the 'actions' or 'motions' of the system.

One of the pedagogical practices against which Schenker rails is the use of artificially constructed musical 'examples' or 'tonal dolls'[65] to demonstrate certain abstracted features of harmonic practice. Here is a passage from Chapter 3, §90, a scathing attack on Ernst Friedrich Richter's *Lehrbuch der Harmonie* (1878):[66]

> Imagine now that the whole book is based on such nonsense, is teeming with such exercises! The student cannot make head or tail of it, and right he is. What

[65] Schenker, *Counterpoint I*, xxx.

[66] Ernst Friedrich Richter, *Lehrbuch der Harmonie: praktische Anleitung zu den Studien in darselben* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1853). The popularity of this primer is evidenced in the fact that Schenker's copy was the 23rd edition (1902).

> he is yearning to see, the confirmation of theoretical propositions in examples from the works of the great masters, he looks for in vain in this book. It is hard to understand, and yet it is the sad truth that in the textbooks on harmony a real work of art is never mentioned. It seems to me that in other disciplines such books would be unthinkable![67]

The spiralling structure of Schenker's system recalls, as we have seen, something of Freud's characterization of the metropolitan 'malady' of neurosis, especially in its obsessional manifestation. There does indeed exist a powerful homology between the *idée fixe* of scholarly distanciation and Freud's characterization of the neurotic: in both, there is a clear and unremitting attention to repetition, as a ritualized, putatively productive activity (productive for both the student and the analysand); there is also the 'metropolitan' (or perhaps better, analytical–synthesic[68]) tone of the writing, its beseeching, polemical gestures, its self-congratulatory implication in good pedagogical practice. Yet, two crucial features of this argument are worth noting here: (i) that the commonplace (flawed) pedagogical project as practised by Schenker's contemporaries and their forbears is imagined as a micro-social exchange between pedagogue and student and is characterized by a fundamental *breakdown* of communication, a breakdown that is disastrous since that failure is the great trauma that threatens the common practice; (ii) that the *commonplace* pedagogical programme that Schenker seeks to critique is characterized by its *abstraction* from the repertory and the practices it seeks to elucidate, whereas Schenker seeks to embed any such pedagogical project in a gradual acquisition by the student of an intimate knowledge of the repertory. Hence, the observation of any parallel between Schenker's authorial ego and Freud's obsessional-neurotic is not strictly a psychoanalytical observation, but a recognition of a shared contemporaneity in their figuration of the self, both in terms of the student in the empirical data web (analysand) and the writing self (neurotic). Hence the two 'qualities' of Schenker's polemic in the passage from the *Harmonielehre* (communicative breakdown and abstraction) draw on contemporaneous cultural tropes of the self, tropes we have already encountered in Freud's contemporaries and which we shall revisit shortly.

In both terms of the argument (systemic breakdown and abstraction), Schenker appeals implicitly and explicitly to an accumulative corrective model of pedagogy, one aimed at the student in need of detailed and open-ended engagement with the data set of the common practice. For Schenker, this is the student who, up to now, has been confused, bewildered, lost in the jungle of false pedagogues, prey to disreputable charlatans:

[67] Schenker, *Harmony*, 176.

[68] I take the latter part of this characterization (synthesic) from Blasius, *Argument*, 90–94.

> If the teacher is unable to explain his own propositions – e.g., what is the difference between strict composition and free composition; what is the original and inalienable meaning of this or that rule of voice-leading in strict composition; and what would be the aspect of a prolongation or extension of such rule in free composition, etc. – and if the teacher finally fails to illustrate and confirm such rules with examples from works of art, the student, in his blessed state of youth, may be careless enough to overlook for the time being all those gaps; he may be content not to understand the meaning of the proffered doctrine while silently hoping for a time to come when he might meet art in theory. Vain hope! The teacher closes his classes in harmony; he closes his classes in counterpoint, finishes them off in his own way; but not even the first step towards art has been taken.[69]

Schenker's arrival into the pedagogic farce is accompanied by an exemplification from the common practice, Bach, a great love of Schenker's, pointing up the poverty of the abstracted example composed for the pedagogic purpose by Richter, which Schenker quotes at the outset of his account of the 'theory of scale step':

> The practical purpose, which we have just shown in the case of the general bass example from Bach, does not exist in the case of the Richter example. The two examples differ with regard to the character of the bass line: in the latter case, we are faced with scale-steps; in the former, with a true bass line. It is impossible that every note of a bass line should be a scale-step and that the progression of the bass notes should be identical with the progression of the scale-steps. The Richter example, which, as we have seen earlier, cannot be considered either as contrapuntal or as harmonic, is thus, finally, not even an example of a general bass.[70]

This distanciation works according to a logic that, yet again, ranges Schenker against his Other(s), the commonplace, the rabble of pedagogues, a hopeless *Schreib-Gesindel* as Nietzsche's Zarathustra termed them: hopeless abstraction vs productive exemplification, idealist incompetent vs realist professional, anachronistic befuddlement vs grounded clarity.

One element of this binaristic logic that needs comment here is the central importance of the student's healthy empirical engagement with the repertory ('silently hoping for a time to come when he might meet art in theory'). In this, we encounter a conception of the student that would have been unthinkable before this *fin de siècle*. The figuration of the student as engaging in an intimate but distanced exchange with the teacher, as carefully led into the daunting and complex world of tonal harmony, guided by the benevolent hand of the professional teacher who draws on an intimate knowledge of the cultural products of the canon to exemplify

69 Schenker, *Harmony*, 178.

70 Ibid., 181.

each step towards cognisance of the system, but who allows the student room to experiment, to examine for her- or himself the subtleties of the tradition and to find her or his own solution – all of this is built around the very contemporary problem of subject development, especially as articulated within the ever-expanding fields of the empirical sciences.

Schenker's comments on the 'end' of the course underline his careful unwillingness to project the pedagogical process too far beyond the experience of the student. The approach he wishes to take in this pedagogical endeavour is far from crudely accumulative, and is an essentially empirically orientated, self-guided undertaking for the student. There is a striking resonance here with contemporaneous debates about *Bildung* or 'formation' of the self and, in particular, with Freud's ruminations, distilled towards the end of his career, on the problems of the *end* of analysis. For Freud, in a late paper, 'Terminable and interminable analysis' (1937),[71] the end of analysis is an ambiguous and highly contested moment in which the analysand can suffer some trauma:

> Experience has taught us, [those who practice] psychoanalytic therapy, that the freeing of a person of his/her neurotic symptoms, constraints and character abnormalities is a long and arduous task. Hence, from the very beginning, every effort was made to shorten the length of analysis. These efforts required no justification but could call on the most understandable and useful motivations. But probably there was also a remnant of that impatient disregard with which an earlier period of medicine viewed the neurotic, as the superfluous results of invisible damage. If one now wanted to deal with them, one did so with the utmost speed.[72]

For Freud, as for Schenker, the end of the 'system' or 'process' is a problem that is grounded in hopeless earlier practices and, for both, the end of the process (of analysis and instruction respectively) must be handled with care. At §182, at the close of the *Harmonielehre*, Schenker returns to this problematic of the structure of the pedagogical programme, a theme that occupies much of this volume:

[71] Freud, 'Die endliche und die unendliche Analyse', *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse* 23 (1937), 209–240, repr. Gesammelte Werke (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 16, 59–99.

[72] 'Erfahrung hat uns gelehrt, die psychoanalytische Therapie, die Befreiung eines Menschen von seinen neurotischen Symptomen, Hemmungen und Charakterabnormitäten ist eine langwierige Arbeit. Daher sind von allem Anfang an Versuche unternommen worden, um die Dauer der Analysen zu verkürzen. Solche bemühungen bedurften keiner Rechtfertigung, sie konnten sich auf die verständigsten und zweckmäßigsten Beweggründe berufen. Aber es wirkte in ihnen wahrscheinlich auch noch ein Rest jener ungeduldigen Gerinschätzung, mit der eine frühere Periode der Medizin die Nuerosen betrachtet hatte, als überflüssige Erfolge unsichbarer Schädigungen. Wenn man sich jetzt mit ihnen beschäftigen mußte, wollte man nur möglichst bald mit ihnen fertig werden.' Ibid., 59. My translation.

> Therefore, I say, the beginner should not be underrated. *Whenever he begins to modulate and preludize, he should be encouraged by all means to do immediately what really has to be done*. The subject itself of his studies demands this. It is better to be indulgent with his awkwardness, even his gross errors, as long as necessary than to mislead him as to the true nature of his task and to let him kill time with absurd activity.[73]

The quality of Schenker's polemic, then, invokes a key contemporary problematic: how to constitute the modern subject within the fragmentation (in Karl Marx's terms 'specialisation') of knowledge into the numerous branches of the new sciences. Friedrich Kittler has rightly articulated this problem in terms of what he calls the *experimental* subject, the subject injected, as it were, into a random generator of discursive fragments. Kittler's characterization of the 1900 discourse network is worth briefly revisiting here in order to explicate Schenker's approach to the exemplary (abstract) experimental student. In particular, the crucial determinant of the new network is its intimate exploration of certain forms of discursive randomness. In true Kittlerian manner, this insight, rather 'epic' in its conception but highly particularizing in its execution, is revealed with a great flourish:

> In the discourse network of 1900, discourse is produced by RANDOM GENERATORS. Psychophysics constructed such sources of noise; the new technological media stored their output.[74]

And later in the same chapter:

> In the discourse network of 1900, psychophysical experiments were incorporated as so many random generators that produce discourses without sense or thought. The ordinary, purposeful use of language – so-called communication with others – is excluded. Syllabic hodgepodge and automatic writing, the language of children and the insane – none of it is meant for understanding ears or eyes; all of it takes the quickest path from experimental conditions to data storage.[75]

Hence, the centrality of what might be termed an *experimental subjectivity* in the new network is crucial to an understanding of how Schenker would conceive of the exemplary pedagogical situation. For Schenker, a rather loose psychologism and an even looser philologism offer productive ways of both figuring and structuring the subject's encounter with the tradition, offering a way both of *talking about* musical effects on the listening subject as limited, measurable and predictable (as true in all circumstances), and a way of structuring a pedagogical programme around the

[73] Schenker, *Harmony*, 338. My italics.

[74] Friedrich Kittler, *Discourse Networks: 1800/1900*, trans. by Michael Metteer (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 206.

[75] Ibid., 229.

putative universality (or, in this case, a better term might be 'automatism') of the experimental subject.

The student's encounter with the tradition is by no means altogether dissimilar to the experience of the empirical 'subject' of Wilhelm Wundt's experimental tachistoscope. In these 'experiments' a nonsense fragment was exposed for milliseconds to the subjects (usually with Wundt among them), who were, as Kittler puts it, 'chained so as to hinder or even prohibit movement, facing black viewing boxes out of which for the duration of a flash … single letters shone out. This is modernity's allegory of the cave.'[76] The 'subjects' [*Versuchspersonen*] of the experiments are also subjects [*Subjekte*], and it is in this overlap between the two typologies – the one articulated as receiver of stimuli, the other as an idealized observer of those stimuli – that the experimental subject is located, at the boundary between objects and subjects of discourse. For Schenker, to allow a student to 'preludize and modulate' is not to counter the logic of this new empirical science, not to break the chains of the *Versuchsperson* in Wundt's tachistoscope experiments, but to embrace that new subject, to indulge the freedoms that Wundt seeks to limit (but also thereby observe). For both, the exploration of experimental *freedom* and *randomness* is achieved by a meditation on the limits of (and boundaries between) the two: Schenker's psychologism and Wundt's empiricism both attempt to deliver a picture of the self's relationship with external stimuli in which that self is projected as both a *receptor* and *observer*.

How close this image of the experimental self is to images of the metropolitan self we have already encountered in Le Bon, Freud, Simmel and Nietzsche. For Nietzsche, the experimental subject is the marker of a 'stink' of the spirit, a bureaucratically projected automaton that is spawned in the great pedagogical 'original sin' of the pedagogical practice of the *deutsche Arbeit* [German essay] in which the pupil is given room to explore 'freely' his own development, to generate the original sin of literary production:

> The last department in which the German teacher in a public school is at all active, which is also regarded as the sphere of highest activity and is here and there even considered the pinnacle of public-school education, is the "German essay". Because the most gifted pupils almost always display the greatest eagerness in this department, it ought to have been made clear how dangerously stimulating, precisely here, the task of the teacher must be. The German essay is a call to the individual, and the more strongly a pupil is conscious of his distinguishing qualities, the more personally will he do his German essay. This "personal doing" is further encouraged at most schools by the choice of essay topics, and I find the strongest evidence of this in the lower grades, where pupils are given the non-pedagogical topic of describing their own life, their own

[76] Ibid., 222.

> development … How often does someone's later literary work turn out to be the sad consequence of this pedagogical original sin against the spirit![77]

Nietzsche's' point here, I think, is that the materiality of cultural production, magically hidden to the romantic and a source then of its power, is now uncovered, no longer a source of power but implicated in a debilitating network in which the subject is its *Versuchsperson*, integrated into the machine of cultural production:

> It is deathly still in the room – the one sound is the pen scratching across the paper – for I love to think by writing, given that the machine that could imprint out thoughts into some material without their being spoken or written has yet to be invented. In front of me is an inkwell in which I can drown the sorrows of my black heart, a pair of scissors to accustom me to the idea of slitting my throat, manuscripts with which I can wipe myself, and a chamber pot.[78]

Writing, reduced to the mechanisms of cultural production (the scratching of the pen on the paper 'meine Feder kratzt nur auf dem Papier'), serves here as a model of cultural production in the new discourse network: the romantic subject, bearer of discourse, and arbiter of the magical powers of cultural production, is now reduced to a node in a system of crossing discourses in which the hard materiality of discourse is uncovered. Schenker's take on the experimental subject is far less radical but, like Nietzsche's imagination of the silent productivity of the schoolboy, perilously close to self-mutilation, the pedagogical subject is an exemplar of the experimental self, subjecting itself, and subjected, to a radical embodiment.

[77] From a lecture given by Nietzsche in 1973, 'Spitze der Gymnasialbilding', in Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montimnari (eds), *Friedrich Nietzsche, Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1975), volume 3, 41. Quoted in Kittler, *Networks*, 180.

[78] From a fragment written in 1862, in Karl Schlechte and Hans Joachim Mette (eds), *Friedrich Nietzsche, Werke und Briefe: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, volume 2 (Munich: Beck, 1933–1942), 71. Quoted in Kittler, *Networks*, 181. Compare this with Franz Kafka's description of his writing desk which I quote in Chapter 4 of this volume. Kafka, in a letter to Oskar Pollak, 24 August, 1902: 'Ich saß an meinem schönen Schreibtisch. Du kennst ihn nicht. Wie solltest Du auch. Das ist nämlich ein gut bürgerlich gesinnter Schreibtisch, der erziehen soll. Der hat dort, wo gewöhnlich die Knie des Schreibers sind, zwei erschreckliche Holzspitzen. Und nun gib acht. Wenn sich ruhig setzt, vorsichtig, und etwas gut Bürgerliches schreibt, dann ist einem wohl. Aber wehe, wenn man sich aufregt und der Körper nur ein wenig bebt, dann hat man unausweichlich die Spitzen in den Knien und wie das schmerzt. Ich könnte Dir dir dunkelblauen Flecken zeigen. Und was will das nun bdeuten: "Schreibe nichts Aufgeregtes und laß Deinen Körper nicht zittern dabei".' *Briefe*, 11, trans. by Spector, *Territories*, 2.

After Psychologism?

One place where the experimental subjectivity of the new sciences is particularly evident is, as we have seen, in Schenker's appeal to psychology. Schenker's psychologism, indeed, whilst according to Blasius far from unconventional amongst *fin-de-siècle* theorizations of harmony and counterpoint, is not only touched deeply by the new empiricism (indebted, as Blasius makes clear, to Helmholtz's theorization of *Tonempfindung* or the 'sensation of tones', and articulating the listening subject as susceptible to the effects of musical stimuli), but it also relies on a much more general 'scientist' currency that was making itself felt throughout the human sciences, particularly evident in a drive towards systematic taxonomy. The relationship in Schenker between psychologism and a more generalized soft 'scientism' is difficult to calibrate. Indeed, Blasius suggests that, although Schenker makes appeal in the *Harmonielehre* and more explicitly in the first volume of *Counterpoint* to the psychologism of Wundt and Strumpf, by *Counterpoint II* (1922), that appeal seems to be waning in favour of a more integrated theory, a more pragmatic, less scientized model of musical process.[79] Blasius's explanation for this apparent 'abandonment' is enticing:

> even if we choose not to read the abandonment of the rhetoric of psychological "laws" in *Counterpoint II* as the result of a biographical or ideological shift, we are led alternatively to read this abandonment as the product of an inevitable recognition on the part of Schenker of the inherent limits of his earlier incorporation of natural science.[80]

This notion that Schenker abandoned psychologism as a result of his loss of faith in the claims of the empirical sciences is persuasive. Indeed, it is clearly the case that the fashion for explicit psychologism was beginning to wane by the late 1910s, but Blasius's explanation of the 'abandonment' is strange: he suggests that the publication in 1905 of a critique of psychologism by Wilhelm Dilthey might be a way of contextualizing Schenker's putative 'abandonment'. Dithey's 'Ideen über eine beschreibende und zergleidende Psycholgie' ['Ideas on a descriptive and taxonomical psychology'] was well known in the period and its critique of empirical psychologism is comprehensive and potentially devastating. Yet, what needs to be held in view here is the fact that even Dilthey himself was not immune to the charms of the empirical world view: as Kittler points out, in his outline of the 'untranslatability' of media in the 1900 discourse network, Dilthey makes an appeal to the findings of empirical science, especially Fechner.[81] As susceptible

[79] Blasius, *Argument*, 5–13.

[80] Ibid., 10.

[81] 'To demonstrate that the poetic effect is nearly lost in prose translations, despite his own doctrine of hermeneutic understanding, Dilthey cited Fechner, the inventor of psychophysics. Reference to scientific studies was the innovation here. Magical or

as Dilthey proved to the charms of scientism, there is still the small matter of the hostility of his doctrine of *Verstehen* to psychologism and it is on this primary Diltheyan category that Blasius stakes his 'abandonment' claim. Yet the fact that Dilthey *of all people* should make an appeal to the psychophysics of Fechner shows surely how *ubiquitous* the scientist turn had become and suggests, rather, that the scope of its 'decline' in the 1910s and 1920s might be somewhat exaggerated. Schenker, I suggest, did not abandon his faith in the empirical sciences, but, rather, has become so convinced of their effectiveness and purposefulness that surface appeals to them become redundant. In *Counterpoint II*, although we certainly witness a change of tone, Schenker by no means abandons the epistemological toolset of the first volume and, indeed, works hard to articulate an intimate connection between this volume and its 1910 predecessor, the latter resolutely built, he would have us believe, on the former:

> Twelve years have passed since the publication of the first volume of *Counterpoint*. But during this protracted interval my activity has not ceased; on the contrary, I have occupied myself by design with works that had the function of amplifying the basic concepts of the *Theorien und Phantasien*. As I found it useful at the time – following the demands of necessity – to precede *Counterpoint* with *Harmony* as the first volume, and, as I felt compelled – again, following demands of necessity – to juxtapose immediately with voice leading in two-voice counterpoint the prolongations of free composition, by the same logic it appeared useful to show the operation of the laws I presented in *Harmony* and *Counterpoint I*, in living works of art of the highest rank, even before I clarified those laws in subsequent volumes revealing their higher manifestation.[82]

Particularly interesting, in the context of our examination here of Schenker's 'taxonomical' or soft scientist logic, is this retrospective assessment of *Counterpoint I*:

> This work-plan had the advantage that, in the present volume, I could refrain from such a detailed and extensive comparison of strict counterpoint and free composition as was necessary in the first. I considered it important, however, to maintain the *encyclopedic method of presentation*.[83]

This characterization of the structure of the first volume on counterpoint as 'encyclopedic' is a clumsy attempt by Schenker to make claims to his work as

theological untranslatability was an ancient topos that became fashionable again circa 1900, but no appeal to magical spells could hide the fact that psycho-technical untranslatability had been experimentally and recently established rather than miraculously found.' Kittler, *Networks*, 268.

[82] Schenker, *Counterpoint II*, xii.

[83] Ibid., xii. My italics.

system and it also, I suggest, seeks to make claims to a certain open-ended empirical character in his project; this 'encyclopedism', then, is largely synonymous with 'taxonomous' or 'empirical' (in the quite specific terms in which they were used at the last *fin de siècle*). Schenker's imagination of his project is as a fluid engagement with the materials of the tradition, as a 'system' that actively posits the experimental subjectivity of the empirical subject as both exemplary *receiver* of musical stimuli and *observer* of their material dynamics.

The figuration of counterpoint as an experimental laboratory in *Counterpoint I*[84] is thus grounded on an epistemological assumption of the ubiquity of the experimental situation: counterpoint, 'die reine Welt', as Schenker termed it in 1919,[85] *is effective only in so far as it articulates itself onto* the subject, in so far as the system of contrapuntal dynamics is understood as effecting a situation in which a listening subject is not merely, as it were, 'awaited', but explicitly *addressed*. The 'purity' of the world of counterpoint rests in a quite specifically post-Wagnerian imagination of so-called 'absolute' music: the materiality of music no longer covers over magical meanings, hidden powers, secretive discourses of the body, dangerous depths, but works as a self-generating *Stoff*, a systemic emptiness, a decathected production that nonetheless charms, but in ways that uncover the *listener* (the structure of the human mind, its psychology) not some great universal *Geist*. In the context of the 1900 discourse network, this emptiness or 'purity' is not a synonym for what Daniel Chua has termed the great 'Nothing' of romantic epistemology: where the early romantics sought to build their aesthetics of music on a 'zero-structure',[86] the empirical world cannot sanction any such absolute. Purity, now taken from *medical* rather than theological discourses, becomes the marker of a new interiority, one in which 'effect' [both *Wirkung* and *Affekt*] signifies the experimental subject's response to stimuli, not some transcendental sounding out of a music that lives in and for itself.

It is here that we can glean one of the sources of Schenker's intense invective, in the very *dichotomy* of his own system that is built on an epistemological ground that threatens that 'system': on the one hand, the great works of the great masters stand as testaments to a golden age of compositional virility, whilst, on the other, the experimental subject, open to the complexity of the products of that great past, stands in stark contrast to the subjectivity of the golden age. In Schenker's 'phallic' discourse, indeed, we encounter again and again a nostalgia for a certain 'lost' subject, for something other than the frivolous dilettante and for a compositional virility that is not mired in the swamp of an unfettered experimental subjectivity and for a time when Schenker's organicism, now reduced to a quaint antiquarianism, could have held sway. This is particularly true of Schenker's diagnosis of the ills of contemporary composition:

[84] See Blasius, *Argument*, 13–15.

[85] Diary entry, 11 June 1919 reprinted in Federhofer, *Tagebüchern*, 89.

[86] Daniel Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 169.

> Indeed, we no longer have *any* technique! Today's generation even lacks the ability just to understand the existing technique of the masters, which would be required as the first step toward any kind of progress. In comparison with works of our masters, today's compositions have to be considered musically too simple, even *far* too simple and too primitive! Despite heaviest orchestration, despite noisy and pompous gestures, despite "polyphony" and "cacophony", the proudest products of Richard Strauss are inferior – in terms of true musical spirit and authentic inner complexity of texture, form, and articulation – to a string quartet by Haydn, in which external grace hides the inner complexity, just as colour and fragrance of a flower render mysterious to humans the undiscovered, great miracle of creation.[87]

Its important, I think, to recognize in Schenker's invective a complex predicament: on the one hand, Schenker embraces (consistently, in my view) a scientist methodology and yet, on the other, he fears the consequences of the empirical subject that that scientism projects. Anxieties about compositorial virility are thus anxieties about modernity. The fear of cacophony is the fear of a musical materiality (or mediality) that cannot lay itself open to anything other than an unfettered consumption and in Schenker's mocking characterization of the worst ills of the dilettante we recognize an anxiety about the spread of extensive and ubiquitous listening:

> if a dilettante has listened only a few times to a symphony by, for example, Beethoven, and thus has become accustomed to it, immediately he makes so bold as to claim impudently that he knows the symphony very well, and then he asks – this dilettante! – for something else, something new, always something else *and* new: in short he wants what is called "progress". For his sake, Beethoven, whose worth is virtually obliterated precisely by estrangement and emaciation, is put aside and one steps "forward" to something allegedly new and better; in other words, this dilettante, like a child, is given a doll, which he soon throws away only to ask for a new one.[88]

The infantilism that Schenker imputes to the extensive listener here recalls the anxieties evident in much earlier debates about reading during the so-called *Lesewut* of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In both diatribes, the guardian of the true way stands at the door, blocking the path of the would-be initiate until he is able to utter the correct assessment of the masters, until, that is, he can speak the father's tongue and enter what Pierre Bourdieu has termed, after Freud, the paternal discourse.[89] For Schenker, however, this anxiety is no longer contemporaneous, no

87 Schenker, *Counterpoint I*, xxi.

88 Ibid., xx.

89 Pierre Bourdieu, *La domination masculine* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1998); trans. by Richard Nice as *Masculine Domination* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), 72.

longer fresh or radical, but part of a consistently conservative resistance to the democratization of musical culture in the *Reichszwielicht*, a resistance that appeals to an extraordinarily virulent nostalgia and heady misanthropy.

Soma/Rabble

So what might it mean to regard Schenker's work as, to a significant degree, *phallogocentric*? As I suggested earlier, the diagnosis is not, of itself, particularly helpful since it is arguably a charge that could be levelled at a great many nineteenth-century German-language writers on music. What the charge needs, then, is a calibration of some kind to enable us to understand both what is specific about Schenker's phallogocentrism and what it enables us to say about the operation of gender politics more broadly in this milieu. Before we can approach this question, however, we will also need to ask some questions about the phallogocentric itself. As we have seen, for Derrida, what can sometimes seem to flow from a neutral 'description' of apparently natural phenomena can also work as, 'a "participation"', since it 'induces a practice, an ethics, an institution, and therefore a politics that ensure the truth of the tradition'.[90] Thus, any putatively neutral description always intervenes in the object it seeks to capture: it has a certain institutional orientation, a set of historically limited conventions that enable certain kinds of observation and interdict others. The charge of 'phallogocentrism', which Derrida levels at Lacan, is a charge that Lacanians would resolutely refute, but one which nonetheless leaves us with a useful frame of reference here. To speak of Schenker as phallogocentric is to observe the participation of his language in a project of naturalization, and, more specifically, the naturalization of masculine authority. Yet how is this charge related to the charge of, for example, misogyny? Are phallogocentrism and misogyny mere synonyms? How is phallogocentrism implicated in, for example, male homosociality? With these questions in mind, I want to add the related notion *androcentrism* to the mix here, a term I take from Pierre Bourdieu, which denotes a vast unconscious field in which the male body continues to be masculinized and the female body feminized and in which that 'interminable task' of making gender induces a 'somatization of the relation of domination':

> It is through the training of the body that the most fundamental dispositions are imposed, those which make a person both *inclined and able* to enter into the social games most favourable to the development of manliness – politics, business, science, etc.[91]

[90] Derrida, *Post Card*, 481n.

[91] Bourdieu, *Domination*, 56.

Androcentrism thus refers to an ongoing process or *regimen* in which the 'natural' recourse of men to the public arena is assured by habituation, where that recourse is being made continually, reinforcing the 'standard' claims of men to own that arena. Bourdieu's 'somatization', perhaps the key conceptual turn in his conception of androcentrism, is a process in which contingent socio-cultural assumptions are projected onto (or into) the body and thereby naturalized, and we are made to feel as if those assumptions came from 'inside' the body. This is how paternal law becomes part of the androcentric unconscious. Bourdieu's 'androcentrism' thus differs from Derrida's 'phallogocentrism' in that the former operates across media, in the social space, going about its work in an array of medialities, exchanges and discursivities, whereas the latter is focussed on the mechanisms by which language (and various forms of 'writing') participate in gender naturalization. The latter, we might say, is pegged into the medialities of speech, writing and other discursive formulations, undertaking something of the work of androcentrism, but in a way that is medially specific.

In the infamous passage from the preface to the first volume of *Counterpoint*, which I have avoided until now, Schenker operates on both of these levels:

> We live in an era in which all values in human relationships are turned exactly upside down, by reason of false, unworthy sentimentality: those who need to be led become leaders; the woman assumes the man's role; the child is pampered as an 'individuality' and excused from work before even having learned to work; workers who represent mere instruments in human form consider themselves producers. … Today even the simplest things are not understood; that everything in the world has its place and is necessary, to be sure, but that it does not follow merely from this necessity that everything is of equal value. That despite their mutual dependency – in terms of necessity of existence, they remain equal! – the man ranks above the woman, the producer is superior to the merchant or the labourer, *the head prevails over the foot*, the coachman is more than the wheel of the wagon he steers, the genius means more than the people who represent merely the soil from which he springs.[92]

The somatic order ('the head prevails over the foot') stands in for the socio-political order (men are better then women, producers are better that labourers) and, at the end of the string of homologous comparisons, the genius emerges as if better than the people. For Žižek, it is precisely in this kind of short-circuit between the universal and the particular (between men as a category and man in the singular, or between the merchant–labourer relationship in general and that relationship as a particular local relationship) that 'politics proper' is constituted, as, 'the paradox of a singular which appears as a stand in for the Universal, destabilizing

[92] Schenker, *Counterpoint I*, xix. My italics.

the "natural" functional order of relations in the social body'.[93] What Schenker's anti-democratic ideology does here is to insist on a natural order in which each has his or her function, in which the relation among merchants and labourers, geniuses and the plebs, is assured and fixed. The imagery in this passage is thus interesting precisely for its intensity: each asymmetrical pair augments the one before it; each points to the next *as if* in a teleological chain. The genius emerges as victorious through the operation of a highly charged polemical inevitability-effect: Schenker makes it seem as if the *telos* (the genius) has emerged 'naturally' at the end of his ('natural') homological chain. What we have here is a hyperbolically orthodox operation of phallogocentric language in which a structure is imposed on disparate (and non-commensurate) elements in order to construct an out-point that seems predetermined, 'immanent'. It is, in precisely *this* immanence, then, that Schenker seeks to enact his conservative gender regimen, in the rituals of saying, repeating, resonating and ordering the world into pathways to the genius.

The symbolic economy of the male genius, especially that genius wrought in the years after the first *Gründerzeit*, is beholden to a quite specific kind of imagination of immanence which Schenker would have recognized also in the Jewish rabbinical tradition: inhering within the genius himself is a divine spark which only he and his like carry, a mark, a tribal mark, a physical cipher that stands for the blessing of his gift. This gift is only realized when the genius extricates himself from the 'soil' of the masses, the swamp, that site in turn-of-the-century biology, of both the collective and the feminine.

In Freud's political economy of the phallus, for example, articulated in its 'complete' form in 1908,[94] the formation of the normative male subject is understood in terms of male castration anxiety and grounded in the trauma of that threatened loss. Also at work in that symbolic economy is the assumption that male desire moves to a full-blown 'rejection of femininity' [*Ablehnung der Weiblichkeit*] in a teleological movement at the end of which lies an unfettered 'free' individuality.[95] The androcentrism of this assumption is an expression, in quite explicit terms, of a view of femininity as something that must be *overcome*, built on the assumption that masculinity works as an *a priori* norm at which the journey of development is aimed, a path from which women, who fail to make that journey, *deviate*. The flight from femininity is a flight to hegemony.

[93] Slavoj Žižek, 'The lesson of Rancière', Afterword to *Jacques Rancière, The Politics of Aesthetics* (London: Continuum, 2004), 69–79: 70. As Žižek also suggests, the 'antidemocratic', such as we see in Schenker, is always about putting things 'back to normal'.

[94] 'Über infantile Sexualtheorien' [1908], *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 7, 171–188.

[95] 'Die endliche und die unendliche Analyse', *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse* 23 (1937), 209–240, repr. *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 16, 59–99.

The polemical terms in which Schenker appeals to this same androcentric logic are, for us at least, quite striking for a preface to a book on counterpoint. In particular, the putative 'naturalness' of the domination of women by man (and of the collective by the singular) is asserted through the listing of a series of socio-cultural relations that appeal to an atavistic political absolutism, a politicized nostalgia: man is superior to woman as merchant is to labourer, and so on. What stands out is Schenker's appeal to the body: man is superior to woman *as the head prevails over the foot*. This is how somatization works, as an implanting of a culturally deduced assumption into the everyday empirical experience of the body so that it can work as a silent hidden hermeneutic frame through which to recast the body. That initial assumption then reigns, *as if the body itself were the source of it*.

Schenker revisits this trope of traumatic separation over and over in his diaries and letters, drawing always on a structure which sets the heroic genius against a mindless mob, the 'soil' or 'source' or 'beginning' from which *he* springs and from which *he* must escape in order to *become*. As Christine de Stefano has noted, the hero represents 'one of the most distinctive psychological features of masculinity' in which extrication of the self from the 'past', the 'mother' and from the rabble is a crucial 'defensive action' against the 'early symbiotic relation' of the male to the (m)other.[96] The rejection of the feminine that Freud, as we have seen, articulated in 1908 and again more fully in 1937 (but present throughout his work), is the apotheosis of a tradition – in order to write in this tradition, it seems, the male author must throw off the source of his infantilism, the (m)other, the crowd. For Schenker, too, the genius marks an exemplary masculinity that *extricates itself* from what Plato in the *Timaeus* dialogue called the *χώρα* [*khôra* or *chora*] or the soil of the collective, casting off the rabble, the plural, (m)Other(s). In a note in his diary from 1906, the year he completed *Harmonielehre*, Schenker takes issue with the democratic figuration of art outlined by the lecturer Robert Hirschfeld, who taught music aesthetics at the Vienna Hochschle:

> With Dr [Robert] Hirschfeld: Controversy re Bruckner and the people in art. Dr H misrecognizes the particular demands of art: at one time or other all genii were men from the people, but the genial understanding of art raised them above the "people". The proposals of the "people" to the artists are certainly the dowry of an as yet unbroken character, of a high spirituality, but materially empty ["stofflich aber minimal"]. The fact simply that someone belongs to the people brings nothing to art. Art – a world for itself – with its own discoveries and experiences [;] does not wish to turn back towards the people; in any case free from every utility [it is] appointed only to be thus in the world, like all other

[96] Christine de Stefano, *Configurations of Maculinity: A Feminist Perspective on Modern Political Theory* (Ithaca, NY: Cormell University Press, 1991), 97; quoted in Chua, *Music*, 150.

> phenomena, sun, moon, religion, love, animals and so on exist. At the same time, the existence of all reasons to exist.[97]

The figuration of the 'contract' that exists between the people and the genius as a 'dowry' ['Mitgift'] resonates with another passage from the diary of 1909:

> That the genius is excluded from both the generosity of charity and the purely economic system is particularly starkly evident. When the factory owner works, for example, for a large group of consumers, then he receives in return his living from them. If the worker undertakes a task for his master, then he will receive from the latter appropriate remuneration for his work. Only the genius who works initially for his contemporaries dispenses with such an equally just relationship: from those to whom he offered his work directly he does not receive his reward in return and, on other hand, he does not live to see those from whom he could, in all eventuality, conversely have lived. Lucky the genius that can live from his own contemporaries![98]

In both entries, Schenker is keen to articulate the role of the genius as one who must always separate himself from the *Alltag* or everyday and retreat into the *reine Welt* or pure world of his art, as if into a garden. The absence of appropriate financial reward, although a source of irritation for Schenker, nonetheless helps

[97] Diary entry dated 10 November 1906, reprinted in Federhofer, *Tagebüchern*, 301. 'Mit Dr [Robert] Hirschfeld Controverse über Bruckner und das Volk in der Kunst. Dr H verkennt die eigenen Forderungen der Kunst: schließlich waren alle Genies der Kunst immerhin doch Männer aus dem "Volk", nur hat der geniale Kunstverstand sie endgültig über das "Volk" herausgehoben. Die Vorschläge des "Volkes" selbst an die Künstler sind die Mitgift freilich eines noch ungebrochenen Charakters, einer hohen Sittlichkeit, stofflich aber minimal. Damit allein aber, daß jemand dem "Volke" angehört, ist für die Kunst noch nichts gewonnen. Die Kunst – eine Welt für sich – mit eigenen Entdeckungen und Erfahrungen; will sich ja auch nicht mehr zurück and Volk wenden; jedenfalls frei von jeglichem Zweck, und nur bestimmt, in der Welt einfach nur so dazusein, wie alle anderen Erscheinungen: Sonne, Mond, Religion, Liebe, Thiere etc. da sind. Existenz zugleich alleiniger Existenzgrund.' My translation.

[98] Diary entry from 1909 (undated), reprinted in Federhofer, *Tagebüchern*, 301. 'Daß das Genie von Wohltaten auch nur der rein wirtschaftlichen Ordnung ausgeschlossen ist, trifft es ganz besonders hart. Arbeitet der Fabrikant z. B. für einen größeren Kreis von Konsumenten, so bezieht er umgekehrt von diesen nun auch die Mittel seines Lebensunterhalts. Leistet der Arbeiter eine Arbeit für den Herrn, so erhält auch er unmittelbar von diesem den Entgelt seiner Leistung: nur das Genie allein, das zunächst für die Zeitgenossen schafft, entbehrt einer so ausgleichend gerechten Beziehung: von denjenigen, denen es seine Leistungen unmittelbar darbot, erhält es leider nicht ebenso unmittelbar seinen Lohn und anderseits erlebt es meistens diejeningen nicht, von denen es umgekehrt allenfalls leben könnte. Wohl dem Genie, das schon von seinen eigenen Zeitgenossen leben kann!' My translation.

underline the burning need in the genius for a distanciation from the base *Verkehr* of the crowd.

In Schenker's phallogocentrism we thus encounter a re-articulation of the androcentric unconscious as both effected *onto* the body and, in its most 'exemplary' manifestation of the genius, as expelled from its 'original' site or *χώρα* (from the rabble, the mire, the people): the *a priori* of masculine domination is thus paradoxical here – it is reworked *onto* the body, which functions as a naturalizing material 'given' ('the head prevails over the foot'), and yet the most powerful manifestation of that domination in the guise of the genius or 'hero' simultaneously *rejects* that self-same fleshly origin, which, construed in *fin-de-siècle* gender nostalgia as the privileged site of the feminine (m)other and of collective enjoyment (a somatized superego if you will), serves as an exemplary Other:

> Lack of technique penetrates artists to the core. When an artist has reached his fortieth year, he becomes listless, at odds with art, at odds with life. He does not know what to do; there is no longer a goal for him; all powers decline. He lacks an organic continuity in pursuing a clear goal in life; he ages and dies. … Wherever one looks today, a burial ground of artists! … And all because the artist neglected in his youth to base his art on a sound foundation that could revitalize him time and time again even in later years.[99]

This startling passage, also from *Counterpoint*, is structured around an image of false, 'weak' artists, where death filters out troublesome corporeality from serene hegemony – death, indeed, underlines the deviant circularity of flesh and teleology ('organic community', 'goal'), and paradoxically marks both the end of the body and the constitutional operation of an exemplary self, as if the flesh must die in order for genius to reign free. Healthy subjectivity is that which is both mindful of its healthy development (in strength, purpose, vitality), but also, unlike the contemporary 'artist', ultimately unburdened of that physicality:

> How different, on the other hand, are our masters! Just see how, as a true artist, each of them – to paraphrase a line from the Song of Solomon – 'ascends like a column of smoke,' increasing the content of his life and art until the end, ever richer, ever more perfect.[100]

The physicality of the new artists' dead bodies contrasts starkly with the posthumous counter-physical glory of the masters' upright perpendicular rising column of smoke. The fleshly prostrate lumpen-physicality of the weak Other is something to be overcome. Schenker thus calls on a dichotomy that we have already noted in our characterization of *fin-de-siècle* gender nostalgia: the use of figurations of virility,

[99] Schenker, *Counterpoint I*, xxii.

[100] Ibid., xxii–xxiii.

healthy physicality (or their counterparts as 'negative' examples) to polemicize a *counter*-physicality. I am reminded here again of Müller's *Mein System* in which similar recourse is made to images of healthy vs sickly men (although here that recourse is far from figurative).[101] Müller also explicitly bemoans the early deaths of artists because 'those geniuses had no thought for the health of their bodies'.[102] Although Müller's observations are centred on an explicit *physicality* of health, and Schenker appeals conversely only to a *figurative* 'health', the parallels between the two articulations of gender nostalgia are striking: artists die because of a cultural sickness, a somatized malaise at the very core of masculinity, and it is only the masters who know how to live (or die) in 'health' and who can serve as exemplars of (or monuments to) exemplary masculinity and masculine creativity.

There is thus in Schenker's gender nostalgia an implicit alignment here of two kinds of Other, the (horizontal) sickly corporeal and the (horizontal) collective, both of which stand in contrast to the exemplary masculinity of the upright (vertical) solitary genius. Yet rarely is this somatization *explicitly* gendered by recourse to the feminine – she stands as one of many silent Others – and rarely is her putative inferiority as openly polemicized as in the infamous passage from the preface to *Counterpoint I* we encountered at the beginning of this section. There is nonetheless a clear articulation of a misogynistic logic, a flight from the collective swamp which resonates strongly with a crypto-Freudian articulation of individuality as an extrication of the exemplary male from the chthonic swamp of the (m)other. This is particularly evident in Schenker's poetics of form in which the organicism of the masters is contrasted with the 'cacophony' of the upstarts: in the preface to *Counterpoint I*, this cacophony, Schenker's acoustic cypher for the collective swamp, is described as the 'excelsior of passing tones' and represents an articulation of the 'new technique' at the hands of the mob:

> If composers could at least demonstrate a greater mastery of this art!! But even here a secure instinct and reliable aural skills are lacking: the passing sounds are usually wrongly constructed, so that disorderly and inadvertently comical discords are generated instead of forthright conflicts between several voices. The present era, which is guilty of using this latest non-technique for the first time in the history of our art, was also the one to find a suitable name for it: generally it is called "cacophony".[103]

This cacophony is an *excess* of passing notes, a collapse of the (vertical) markers of the common practice (the clear distinction between voices, the clear articulation of tonal closure) in favour of a din, the clamour of the crowd. Schenker's articulation of 'cacophony' as a cipher of the new here constitutes a refusal to accept that the 'lower' order elements of common practice tonality (passing notes) should

101 Müller, *System*, 7; trans. and quoted by Anderson, *Clothes*, 80.

102 Ibid., 81.

103 Schenker, *Counterpoint I*, xxii.

be allowed to overwhelm the teleology of the musical materials. In this he draws on a set of cultural tropes that would appear to lie well without the bounds of counterpoint, but which nonetheless permeate his cultural politics: lower order tonal materials, made homologous to an unruly crowd, must be disciplined by the musical syntax at the hands of the consummate master.

Conclusion: The Politics of the Particular

In *Counterpoint II*, Schenker intensifies his hostility to the collective in a rage against the so-called German and Austrian Republics:

> But democracy stubbornly resists recognizing its own misconceptions and lies, its violations of nature and culture. If Nature herself decreed evolution for humankind from its cradle onward, the people-panderers have proclaimed evolution to be unnecessary for a democratic man: as he is, so he remains.[104]

Although far from unique in its anti-democratic vitriol, what stands out here in the appeal to nature (and to Darwin) is the extraordinary intensity of Schenker's conservatism. Žižek has suggested that this kind of anti-democratic sentiment constitutes a desire for the stilling of the political domain: 'the basic aim of antidemocratic politics always – and by definition – is and was depoliticization, i.e. the unconditional demand that "things should return to normal"'.[105] In this, then, Schenker's conservativism, as Nicholas Cook has recently shown, is both commonplace and startling.[106] Yet where Cook seeks to historicize Schenker, give good reason for the sour-faced tone and aristocratic haughtiness of Schenker's writing, I want to pay attention to what cannot be excised from the Schenkerian ideology. This commonplace polemic, coloured by an inter-war anti-democratic sentiment that makes sense only to the extent that it is not unusual in the hothouse political atmosphere of the Republics, is also nonetheless a 'participation', to use Derrida's term, a deliberate and consistent attempt to silence the vernacular, without end, without let up, without mercy.

For me, it is in the persistence of these aristocratic sentiments in our own discipline, less extremely articulated, less openly articulated, that the urgency of critically rereading Schenker resides. The appeal to Darwin is also, of course, an appeal to the foreclosure of the political altogether. Schenker's conservatism, compounded in his rage against the dilettante, is extreme not simply for its tone, which can be put down to local conventions and practices. No, Schenker's political ontology is extreme in and of itself:

104 Schenker, *Counterpoint II*, xiv.

105 Žižek, 'Lesson', 70.

106 Nicholas Cook, *Project*, 140ff.

> Where Goethe leads his Wilhelm Meister from noble dilettantisms to a useful occupation, democracy on the contrary guides its followers away from occupations (which would perhaps better suit them, or would at least be honourable) to activities and pursuits inappropriate to them … Disrespect for any kind of labour other than that pursued by a disciple of Marx has led to granting even a right of idleness to such a disciple, who is remunerated at the expense of the work of women and intellectual labourers.[107]

The use of 'feminine labour' as a trope of denigration is unforgivable here: democracy dares to align intellectual labour with that of women! The cacophony of democracy in *Counterpoint II* ratchets up the polemic of *Counterpoint I*, but in both volumes Schenker's predicament is clear: on the one hand, Schenker appeals to the vast epistemological resources of the new sciences to effect his project, to bring about the reinstatement of 'true' art and the 'true' import of the genius; on the other, it is the ideology of 'progress', the embrace of the masses and the teachings of Karl Marx's 'science' of socialism and ultimately the march of industry at the hands of the masses, that threatens the 'truths' that Schenker is seeking to communicate.

Inside, and out, conservative and progressive, misanthrope and benign humanist, misogynist and radical – in all these roles, Schenker assumes the exemplary intellectual burden, the burden of the alienated metropolitan in the face of the new experimental order. Schenker was thus both radically ordinary, and yet quite extraordinary among his contemporaries for his eloquent defence of the autocratic rule of the cognoscenti against the rising tide of the dilettantish vernacular horde. The attempts by many pro-Schenkerians to make room for this haughty autocratic ideology as merely 'local', 'specific', 'particular' (as serving, that is, the relativizing sleight of hand that Žižek has termed 'historicism'), seems to me to partake of a certain liberal fantasy. Put briefly, that fantasy resides in the belief (often very firmly held) that the liberal condition is *the* condition of possibility. Or, to put it in perhaps slightly less abstract terms, liberalism believes itself to be founded in an openness to difference, a sensitivity to the polyphony of the diverse and competing claims of the *dēmos*. Where it seeks to make room for undemocratic ideologies, so it would have us believe, it does so in the spirit of trying to understand that difference. Yet, what the *consensus gentium* of liberal ideology covers over (and in readings of Schenker this is particularly pronounced) is a rather baser motivation for that apparently benign 'inclusion'. In other words, the conservatism of Schenker's ideology is 'included' (apologized for, made symptomatic of 'local' difficulties) not from some rational scholarly motivation, as the liberal fantasy would have us believe, but from a dark hidden motivation in which the liberal is always already secretly desirous of the undemocratic, in which it recognizes its own autocratic desires. To make room for this ideology, particularly in the world in which we now live, is ultimately to make room not

[107] Ibid., xv.

only for a brutal denigration of the feminine and the vernacular, but to clothe the undemocratic in the garb of the democratic.

Chapter 4
Song of the Body: Mahler, Kafka and the Male Jewish Body at the Habsburg *fin de siècle*

Mahler brought his baton down – life-giving blood pounded rhythmically through the body.[1]

(Emil Gutmann)

I … am in such a state of flux, sometimes I should hardly be surprised suddenly to find myself in a new body.[2]

(Mahler)

Introduction: Mahler's Body

It is clear (or, at least, intensely apparent) that bodies are the sites of discourse. This is amply demonstrated at the Habsburg twilight by the proliferation of theses on pathology, disease, gender and sexuality, which concentrate their energies on the fleshly; they constitute a powerfully overdetermined focusing of discursive activity on the body. Whilst it is certainly the case that the Habsburg *fin de siècle* deals with the body in ways deeply indebted to a long and vigorous humanist tradition of the body,[3] the particularity of the re-figuration of that tradition is what concerns us here: how did the new sciences of the body circumscribe the public experiences of Mahler's body? And how did public debates about the body and its appropriation frame Mahler's private figurations of his own body? To attempt to answer this last question is no simple matter: unlike many of his contemporaries, Mahler has left us very little of the usual material for biographical speculation – no diaries, no memoirs, very little in his letters. This chapter will thus attempt to think through the problematic of Mahler's body as both an historical and a political object of analysis by scrutinizing some of the contemporaneous literatures (fiction,

[1] Emil Gutmann, 'Gustav Mahler als Organisator', *Die Musik*, 10(8) (June 1911), 364–365. My translation. Available in translation by Peter Rivers, 'Gustav Mahler as Organizer' in Herta Blaukopf (ed.), *Mahler's Unknown Letters*, trans. by Richard Stokes (London: Victor Gollancz, 1986), 84–88: 88.

[2] Letter to Bruno Walter (undated), New York, beginning of 1909, in Martner Knud (ed.), *Selected Letters of Gustav Mahler* (New York: Faber and Faber, 1979), 329.

[3] See in particular Roy Porter, 'History of the body', in Peter Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 206–232.

psychoanalysis, medicine) that help form a cultural currency of the body, and will employ a series of interpretative strategies that centre on Mahler's body as an agent in the formation of that currency.

Mahler's body, it seems, was a deviant body: in the late nineteenth-century (racio-)criminological mind, there is an unbroken continuity from the deviant bodies of prostitutes, harridans, perverts, homosexuals, criminals, through to the bearers of sickness, the insane and 'lower' racial types such as the Hottentot, the Negro and the Gypsy. The Jewish male body is similarly marked in the raciological discourses of the time by its physical 'inadequacy' and deviant genus. As we shall see, it is a crucial determining inclination of Viennese raciology to read the surfaces of bodies and their morphology as *bedeutsam* ('meaningful') of their *Charakter* ('character') or *Gattung* ('species'). The inclusion of the Jewish body amongst the other 'deviant' bodies is grounded in a logic of *marginalization through embodiment*: this structural trope identified by Elaine Scarry in *The Body in Pain* is strictly binaristic.[4] In a range of literary sources from the *fin de siècle* we encounter a tendency to juxtapose the seamless, 'light' and 'invisible' body of hegemonic masculinity with the intensely visible and over-signified fleshly bodies of its deviant Others. Something of this stubbornly alteritous formulation is captured in a short diary entry made by that most eloquent of witnesses to the Habsburg twilight, Franz Kafka, in 1914, three years after Mahler's death, in which he observed two men in a room in the building opposite his window:

> 29 July. The two friends, one of them blond, resembling Richard Strauss, smiling, reserved, clever; the other dark, correctly dressed, mild-mannered yet firm, too dainty, lisped;[5]

This striking duality, one that Sander Gilman has also recognized in the Mahler/Straus juxtaposition,[6] is a telling addendum to Scarry: not only were hegemonic masculinities characterized by their 'lightness' but they were also marked by a comfortable physicality ('smiling, reserved, clever'). The overdetermined embodiment of the Other of that comfortable physicality, the thin, dark, slightly fussily dressed, 'too dainty' masculinity of the 'smart Jew' (or, indeed, any smart Other), is achieved – unlike Scarry's British colonial examples of the overdetermined healthy bodies of, for example, 'black' men – through a sickliness or over-articulated counter-physicality: it is in the Other that the body seems to be

[4] Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[5] Franz Kafka, *Diaries*, ed. by Max Brod and trans. by Martin Greenberg and Hannah Arendt (London: Penguin Books, 1964), 297. 'Die zwei Freunde, der eine blond, Richard Strauss ähnlich, lächelnd, zurückhaltend, gewandt, der andere dunkel, korrekt angezogen, sanft und fest, allzu geschmeidig, lispelt.' Kafka, *Tagebücher 1910–1923* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1998), 301.

[6] Sander L. Gilman, 'Strauss, the pervert, and avant-garde opera of the fin de siècle', *New German Critique* 43 (winter 1988), 35–68.

under a kind of malevolent erasure, not in the wielders of discourse, as in Scarry's model. We can nonetheless accept Scarry's thesis that 'those without power' will have a 'body made emphatic by being continually altered through various forms of creation, instruction and *wounding*' (my emphasis), and that this body marks a territory that contracts one's sphere of existence, 'down to the small circle of one's immediate presence'.[7] We can thereby also note the specificity of the Austro-German imagining of the duality in the slenderness and wistful cerebrality of the Jewish Other and the healthy physicality of the hegemon. The 'wounding' that Scarry so eloquently outlines is manifest here in an internalized (racial) mark of difference: the Jew is marked out as suffering from (wounded by) its peculiar *ontogeny*, from its very biological 'nature'. The urgent problem for a public male Jew like Mahler was *not* simply how to attempt to acquire the comfortable public physicality of the hegemon, but, more readily, how to erase or somehow challenge the bodily impediment (of the sickly Jewish 'intellectual' body) to the wielding of public cultural power. The consequences of Scarry's theory of embodiment are far-reaching, but useful in this context only if modified slightly: whilst intense representation (embodiment) can function as a way of regulating the symbolic meanings of bodies, which stand outside the hegemonic physicality of 'upright' bourgeois propriety, that embodiment can work also (as it does here) as a kind of pathologization and 'thinning' (rather than Scarry's thickening) of the physicality of the racial Other. A heavy muscular fleshiness and a thin cerebrality are both others here.

At the Habsburg *fin de siècle* there exists a range of body types that are wilfully and consistently marginalized from dominant discourses. The putative 'normality' of certain forms of military, bourgeois and public masculinities is maintained through this marginalization. The deviant bodies are often marked by their racial difference and, as we have seen, the Jewish male body in particular stands as an exemplar of 'non-German' masculinities. Like Kafka's huge (baby-) father in *Das Urteil*,[8] the upright male body of the empowered Austro-German hegemon is a highly discursive graphism (an emptied 'shape' or shell) that can expand itself to cover an inordinate amount of cultural space and, like the Kaiser-figure in Heinrich Mann's ironic novel *Der Untertan*, that hegemonic graphism is empty, unfettered by deviant 'character' and has 'no limits on [its] extension out into the world' despite (perhaps because of) its fleshly physicality.[9] To use Deleuze and Guattari's term, it is a completely *deterritorialized* body.[10] For the

[7] Scarry, *Body*, 207.

[8] Elizabeth Boa, *Kafka: Gender, Class and Race in the Letters and Fictions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 118: 'And textually, the father's old body transforming into the monster-baby is the leading motif in a masterly horror–comedy of the uncanny which bursts out of the naturalist mode'.

[9] Scarry, *Body*, 207.

[10] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

Jewish body, conversely, it is the perception of its very *particularly* embodied 'character' (its thin, spindly *Ungeschicklichkeit* or 'awkwardness') that marks it as an impediment to the experience of and pleasuring in cultural space. As we shall see, the anxiety about cultural space finds particularly powerful expression in German-Jewish literature from the period and has been linked by Deleuze and Guattari to Kafka's notion of a 'minor literature'.[11] The attempt to disrupt that impediment, the strategic dislocation of the body (as a kind of internalized flesh(l)y ghetto) from Jewish male creativity, a strategy followed with zeal by Mahler, Kafka, Brod, Werfel, Buber and other German-Jewish intellectuals from the long *fin de siècle*, is a crucially assimilationist project, and one which, as we shall see, finds resonance in Kafka's view of writing and Mahler's view of composing.

The Immutability of the Jewish Body Through the Prism of *Fin-de-siècle* Medico-Criminology

Late nineteenth-century Viennese criminology was structured around a radicalized understanding of what Otto Weininger called C*harakter*:[12] the markers of deviance were deemed readable in all the outwardly visible signs of facial character, vocal inflection and bodily deportment. There is thus a degree of continuity between the pre-Darwinian and post-Darwinian Austro-German biologies in that the relation of 'outer' bodily signifier to 'inner' ontogeny (the development of the individual) was understood as one governed by *analogy* and/or *homology*. The crucial rupture comes initially not in the deployment of a new fashioning of that relationship – the structuring of that relationship by analogy/homology remains intact – but with the intensified deployment of criminological *categories* reliant on a broad-based body of scientist knowledge which seemed to offer a coherent taxonomy of biological types. It is this new fluid taxonomical logic which generates the particularity of late nineteenth-century Austro-German criminology.

Since the demise of preformationist embryology (the assumption that the personality is fully formed from the earliest stage of the embryo) and the rise of epigenesis (a developmental theory of embryo growth), coupled with the Darwinization of Austro-German biology and zoology, deviant physical typologies were seen to mark not merely the specificity of deviance in the individual ontogeny, but the deviation of the whole genus: *ontogeny* is thus conflated with *phylogeny* (the development of the genus and, by implication, the race). This overarching

[11] Deleuze and Guattari, *Toward*.

[12] Otto Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter* (Vienna: Braunmüller, 1903). For a fascinating analysis of this infamous Jewish anti-Semite, see Sander Gilman, *Jewish Self-Hatred: Anti-Semitism and the Hidden Language of the Jews* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985) and Slavoj Žižek, 'Otto Weininger, or, "woman doesn't exist"', *The Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays on Woman and Causality* (London: Verso, 1994), 137–164.

conflation is a crucial structuring principle of the Austro-German *fin-de-siècle* criminological turn. The conflation touches not only the discourse of types, but also the discourse of pathology – sexual, physical, psychological and racial. What this conflation seemed to promise was a science of typology that offered a general workable modelling of how racial difference was implicated in pathological states and behaviours. What had hitherto functioned as metonymic inferences between the various deviant behaviours (of, for example, same-sex intimacy and masculine creativity[13]) emerges now in a complex network of fully fledged 'scientized' and 'medicalized' causal interconnections between race, gender, sexuality, pathology and criminal behaviour. These relations are now integrated into a much larger system of taxonomies.

The reciprocity of medical pathology and race, for example, is abundantly exemplified in numerous treatises on racial taxonomy. Carl Ernst Bock's 1898 *Das Buch vom gesunden und kranken Menschen*[14] is a demonstration of the kinds of commonplace connections that were made, by Jewish and non-Jewish authors alike, between sickness and racial type (especially that of the Jew, which Bock placed at the same 'lowly' racial 'level' as the Hottentot).[15] Carl Heinrich Stratz also listed the physical proclivities of the Jewish body to infection by certain diseases in a pamphlet written in 1903, linking the then commonplace view of the organic cause of mental illness to a 'proof' of a distinct Jewish morphology.[16] Sander Gilman's work in this field is exemplary; he is keen to stress the coherence of the anti-Semitic 'sciences' in their focusing in on the Jewish body and he cites the infamous lecture before Kaiser Wilhelm II in Berlin in which Freidrich Delitzsch argued:

> with telling visual images from Babylonian sources, that it was quite possible to distinguish the image of the Jews depicted on these ancient monuments because of their similarity to the appearance of Wilhelminian Jews.[17]

For Delitzsch, a central characteristic of the Jewish body, according to Gilman's reading, was the immutability of Jewish physiognomy. Gilman further catalogues at some length the tendencies inherent in *fin-de-siècle* anthropology grounded in scientific racism and the medico-criminological worldview to divide Jewish bodily features into markers of two distinct racial types, projecting putative

[13] Ian Biddle, 'Policing masculinity: Schumann, Berlioz and the gendering of the music-critical idiom', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 124(2) (1999), 196–220.

[14] Leipzig: Ernst Keil, 1893.

[15] For a useful overview of this literature, see Sander Gilman, *The Case of Sigmund Freud: Medicine and Identity at the Fin de Siècle* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1994), 11–68, 19–20, 214–215.

[16] Carl Heinrich Stratz, *Was sind Juden? Eine ethnographisch-anthropologische Studie* (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1903), 5. See also Gilman, *Case*, 15.

[17] Gilman, *Case*, 16.

physical 'evidence' onto cultural and religious groupings. The impetus for Gilman's historiography is clearly radical: the Jewish body served not merely as a convenient site for the discursive working through of Austro-German anxieties about difference but was a site also at which a deep-lying fracture in the very fabric of Austro-German culture was worked through; the Jew was a crucial alteritizing determiner in the anxious imagining of the Austro-German self just as, as we have seen, Sedgwick has been able to demonstrate the centrality of the category 'homosexual' to the imagining of the heterosexual self.[18] Gilman's observations are grounded in work from the 1970s by the Austrian anthropologists Ina Spiegel-Rösing and Ilse Schwideltzky, who noted that *fin-de-siècle* German anthropology tended to seek out physical typologies and map them onto cultural groupings, notably the Ashkenazim and the Sephardim.[19] For Gilman, Spiegel-Rösing and Schwideltzky, it is clear that there is a marked intensification of debates on race at the *fin de siècle*, evidenced in the sudden burgeoning of literatures on Jewish racial morphology.

Several characterizations of, in particular, the *male* Jewish body demonstrated a commonplace tendency to feminize and/or pathologize it: one such characterization involves a consistent tendency in the criminological mind to connect the Jewish practice of *circumcision* to an imagined *castration*, figuring the Jewish male body as crucially *lacking*. For Freud, for example, castration anxiety is grounded in a very real fear generated by a young boy's first observation of female genitalia: she has no penis and therefore his own could be also be 'lost'. This 'reliance' on the unveiling of the pre-pubescent female body for the young male to mark castration anxiety underlies a set of more general cultural anxieties about feminine contagion. In the Viennese raciological mind, the Jewish male body is imagined as a *proxy* for the feminine, and serves as a 'physical' demonstration of what can happen when the penis is 'lost', this loss marked 'clearly' by the Jewish practice of male circumcision. The crisis of homo/hetero definition recognized by Sedgwick[20] is particularly evident in the psychoanalytic discourse on castration, first formulated by Freud in his 'Über infantile Sexualtheorien' (1908) and his analysis of little Hans in 'Analyse der Phobie eines fünfjährigen Knaben' (1909)[21]

> When a small boy sees his little sister's genitals, what he says shows that his prejudice is already strong enough to falsify his perception. He does not comment on the absence of a penis, but *invariably* says, as though by way of

[18] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 1.

[19] Ina Speigel-Rösing and Ilse Schwideltzky, *Maus und Schlange: Untersuchungen zur Lage der deutschen Anthropologie* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1982).

[20] Sedgwick, *Epistemology*, 1.

[21] Sigmund Freud, *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1987), volume 7, 171–188 and 241–377.

> consolation and to put things right: "Her _____'s still quite small. But when she gets bigger it'll grow all right."[22]

And later,

> If this idea of a woman with a penis becomes "fixated" in an individual when he is a child, resisting all the influences of later life and making him a man unable to do without a penis in his sexual object, then, although in other respects he may lead a normal sexual life, he is bound to become a homosexual, and will seek his sexual object among men who, owing to some other physical and mental characteristics, remind him of women.[23]

The quiet wistful tone that attends the heterosexual narrative (also replicated in the case study of 'Little Hans') is contrasted here with the trauma of the homosexual narrative:

> The woman's genitalia, when seen later on, are regarded as a mutilated organ and recall this threat, and they therefore arouse horror instead of pleasure in the homosexual.[24]

The discourse of castration, linked metonymically, as we have seen, to circumcision, is a heterosexual discourse in which the fear of the removal of part of or the entire penis is generated by, and fundamentally linked to, *femininity*. Moreover, as we have seen elsewhere, the hardening of the distinction between feminine and masculine was a crucial project of nineteenth-century Austro-German science, and the male Jewish body is fundamentally implicated thereby in that project by virtue of its putative 'femininity', its 'lack' (of a prepuce). Its closeness to homosexuality is thus assured, in the logic of the time, through a heterosexist articulation of

[22] Sigmund Freud, *The Penguin Freud Library vol. 7: On Sexuality* (London: Penguin Books, 1977, repr. 1991), 194. ('Wenn der kleine Knabe das Genitale eines Schwesterchens zu Gesicht bekommt, so zeigen seine Äußerungen, daß sein Vorurteil bereits stark genug ist, um die Wahrnehmnung zu beugen; er konstatiert nicht etwa das Fehlen des Gliedes, sondern sagt *regelmäßig*, wie tröstend und vermittlend: der … ist aber noch klein; nun, wenn sie größer wird, wird er schon wachsen.' Freud, *Schriften über Liebe und Sexualität* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1994), 75.)

[23] Freud, ibid., 194. ('Wenn sich diese Vorstellung des Weibes mit dem Penis dem Kinde "fixiert", allen Einflüssen des späteren Lebens widersteht und den Mann unfähig macht, bei seinem Sexualobjekt auf den Penis zu verzichten, so muß ein solches Individuum bei sonst normalem Sexualleben ein Homosexueller werden, seine Sexualobjekte unter den Männern suchen, die durch andere somatische und seelische Charaktere an das Weib erinnern.' Freud, *Schriften*, 75.)

[24] Freud, *Schriften über Liebe*, 195. ('An diese Drohung mahnt nun das später wahrgenommene, als verstümmelt aufgefaßte Genitale des Weibes, und darum erweckt es beim Homosexuellen Grausen anstatt Lust.' Freud, *Schriften*, 75–76.)

male homosexuality as a pathological response to the female genitals (although Freud, unlike many of his contemporaries, is at great pains to distinguish between pathology and degeneracy). The crucial organization of the homo/hetero definition here is once again overseen and articulated by the spectre of the feminine: evoked as the fleshly Other of masculine heterosexual identity and figured thereby as a useful bar to same-sex intimacy, she stalks the male homosocial continuum as testament to the horror of loss that enervates male hegemony. The 'lack' of the prepuce in the feminized Jewish male body, the 'Jewish tendency' towards hysteria (also a marker for Freud of male homosexuality[25]) and the Jewish body's overdetermination in medical discourse as a site of disease, created in the raciological mind a link between a propensity for sickness, the male homosexual and the male Jew. What is striking in this context is how the putative 'Jewishness' (and thus 'femininity') of *fin-de-siècle* creative masculinities is assured.

This point of continuity with discourses about male creativity from the first half of the nineteenth century is remarkable for its faithfulness to that older vision: now, however, that vision is also coloured by a scientized raciological and medical logic that responded with vigour to the Wildean 'conflation' of male creativity and homosexuality. The danger inherent in creative masculinities is thereby linked to the homosexual and Jewish character of the artistic subcultures of Berlin, Vienna and Prague: instead of being understood in terms of the socio-cultural dynamics that led Jews and homosexuals to intellectual and creative life, the putative 'Jewishness' of that life in the major German urban centres was connected in the popular raciological discourses to the feminized male body, the feminized Jew and the continued feminization of male creativity. Jew, intellectual, artist, homosexual: the order of things.

Listening to Mahler with Kafka's Ears

Mahler's male Jewish body, weighed down under the intense discursive pressure of the scientist turn of *fin-de-siècle* criminology and raciology, comes to us in a

[25] Freud, ibid., 80: 'The unconscious mental life of all neurotics (without exception) shows inverted impulses, fixation of their libido upon persons of their own sex. It would be impossible without deep discussion to give the adequate appreciation of the importance of this factor in determining the form taken by the symptoms of the illness. I can only insist that an unconscious tendency to inversion is never absent and is of particular value in throwing light upon hysteria in men.' ('Bei allen Neurotikern (ohne Ausnahme) finden sich im unbewußten Seelenleben Regnungen von Inversion, Fiexierung von Libido auf Personen des gleichen Geschlechts. Ohne tief eindringende Erörterung ist es nicht möglich, die Bedeutung dieses Moments für die Gestaltung des Krankheitsbildes entsprechend zu würdigen; ich kann nur versichern, daß die unbewußte Inversionsneigung niemals fehlt und insbesondere zur Aufklärung der männlichen Hysterie die größten Dienste leistet.' Freud, *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1991), 68.)

string of small and perplexing traces. Both Alma and Mahler speak in their letters of Mahler's peculiar tendency to walk in an awkward, cumbersome manner;[26] his propensity to migraines is well documented; similarly, there is the diagnosis in 1907 of Mahler's heart disease; and there is also his propensity to psychosomatic illnesses and depression. This is borne out by Knittel, who references a number of striking descriptions of Mahler's conducting gestures, which engage a number of tropes of the physical description of Jews:[27] Max Graf is keen to stress Mahler's shortness, his glance or 'stare', his 'demonic' personality;[28] Willibald Kähler talks of a 'general nervousness', and the 'somewhat violent' nature of Mahler's conducting style.[29] These observations all point to a profound (publicly performed) fragility, and in all, Mahler's body figures as a problematic *counter*-hegemonic body – thin, bent, bony, demonic, extraordinarily ill-suited to physical activity and too short (certainly shorter than Alma).[30] Mahler's body, like that of his fellow Bohemian-born German-speaking Jewish contemporary Franz Kafka, was 'faulty'. In a letter to Bruno Walter in 1909, Mahler makes a cryptic but revealing reference to his experience of his own body:

> I am experiencing so infinitely much now (in the last eighteen months), I can hardly talk about it. How should I attempt to describe such a tremendous crisis! I see everything in such a new light – am in such a state of flux, sometimes I should hardly be surprised suddenly to *find myself in a new body*.[31]

This strange image, of suddenly finding oneself 'in a new body', activates a number of medical and popular-criminological tropes that attend the Jewish body: one such trope involves the Jewish urban folk myth of the abduction of Jewish children by Catholic housemaids – in the 1850s and 1860s in particular, there was much anxiety amongst well-to-do Jewish parents about the possible abduction of their children into a Christian family after a secret baptism, a baptism to which Freud was himself subjected as a child by his old Czech housemaid.[32] To find oneself suddenly in another body, like Gregor Samsa in Kafka's *Die Verwandlung*, is an

[26] Peter Franklin, *The Life of Mahler* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 127.

[27] K. M. Knittel '"Ein hypomoderner Dirigent": Mahler and anti-Semitism in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna', *19th-Century Music* XVIII(3) (1995), 257–276: 269.

[28] Max Graf, *Legend of a Musical City* (New York, 1945), 204–206, quoted in Knittel, 'Mahler', 269.

[29] Willibald Kähler, *150 Jahre musikalische Akademie des Nationaltheater-Orchesters Mannheim 1779–1929* (Mannheim, 1929), 64–65, quoted in Knittel, 'Mahler', 269.

[30] Ibid., 144.

[31] Letter to Bruno Walter (undated), New York, beginning of 1909, in Knud Martner (ed.), *Selected Letters of Gustav Mahler* (New York: Faber and Faber 1979), 329. My emphasis.

[32] Gilman, *Case*, 76–77.

image grounded in the fear of traumatic loss or dislocation, a perennial trope of the Diaspora, and it is clearly charged by the increasing economic and epistemological precariousness of the Jewish family in the approaching *fin de siècle*. We might thus read this body-exchange as a muted substitution for a sudden traumatic changing of the epistemological landscape, a sudden 'abduction' into the Christian world, or, as Kafka was to reformulate it, referring to his own 'paper' language, that 'Gypsy literature' that has,

> stolen a German child from its crib and, in a great hurray, had somehow trained [the child], because someone has to dance on the [tight]rope. (But it wasn't even a German child, it was nothing; people merely said that somebody was dancing.)[33]

For Mahler, I would like to suggest, it is this abduction into Christianity, a sudden finding of oneself in a different body that holds the key to what I shall term here an *obscene politics*, taking a term borrowed and slightly paraphrased from Slavoj Žižek,[34] in which body and epistemology overlap, where the physical predicament is always already political, ideologically encoded onto the bearer of the animated cadaver, always inscribed (and continually re-inscribing) onto the fleshly limits of the self.

A second, but intimately connected, image that is engaged here is of an unsettling alienation from hegemonic physicality: the new body that Mahler speaks of is invoked by virtue of a great 'crisis'. Coming some two years after the diagnosis of heart disease and the imposition of a strict regimen of rest and limited physical exertion, in fear of the possible onslaught of endocarditis, Mahler's 'crisis' is clearly grounded in his sick physicality, a sickliness that resonates throughout the contemporaneous medical literatures on Jewish 'maladies'. The new body articulates both the obscene politics of self-erosion and the overdetermination of that very physical self that resides in flesh. By 1910, moreover, Mahler is aware of Alma's infidelity with Walter Gropius, marking the great irony in Freud's 1910 diagnosis of Mahler as having a 'mother fixation': Mahler, cast in the role of a sickly Laius, clearly had his own Oedipus with whom to struggle for his *Ersatzmutter* wife.[35] Alma recalls his state of agitation at this time:

[33] Franz Kafka, *Briefe 1902–1924* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1998), 338: 'eine Zigeunerlitertur, die das deutsche Kind aus der Wiege gestohlen und in großer Eile irgendwie zugerichtet hatte, weil doch iregendjemand auf dem Seil tanzen muß. (Aber es war ja nicht einmal das deutsche Kind, es war nichts, man sagte bloß, es tanze jemand.)' My translation.

[34] See Slavoj Žižek, 'Superego by default', *Metastases of Enjoyment* (London: Verso, 1994) 54–85.

[35] This is borne out in Freud's 'diagnosis' at their meeting in Leyden in late August 1910 where Freud suggested, during a four-hour analysis, that Mahler had a 'mother fixation'. Franklin, *Life*, 191. The main text of the meeting is to be found in Freud's letter

> Gustav Mahler, in his last year and in his distress and fear of losing me, travelled to Leiden to see Sigmund Freud who told him, "In every woman you search for your mother, who was a poor, suffering, tormented woman …" and added that, "I am searching for my father as a psychical principle", which was undoubtedly correct.[36]

Mahler's anxieties about his relationship with Alma and his continued health problems can be grounded in a culturally sensitive analysis of how these anxieties might have played out for Mahler in his personal narratives, in what Pierre Bourdieu has elsewhere termed the 'habitus', the action of culture 'onto the body' and the forming of a 'bodily disposition'.[37] Whilst we have very little of Mahler's own thoughts on the matter, Alma's diaries, letters to and from Mahler and to his friends and colleagues, and their reminiscences and suppositions, help locate in Mahler, for those who knew him, a consistent awkwardness with things physical, with women in particular, and a profound anxiety about matters sexual.[38]

Franz Kafka, as we have already noted, shared many of Mahler's 'complaints' and was an obsessive cataloguer of his illnesses. Reading Mahler through Kafka will help us locate the kinds of cultural currency that would have attended Mahler's experience of his own body and the physical and sexual 'awkwardness' of which commentators spoke. In the year of Mahler's death, Kafka noted:

> It is certain that a major obstacle to my progress is my physical condition. Nothing can be accomplished with such a body … [It] is too long for its weakness, it hasn't the least bit of fat to engender a blessed warmth, to preserve an inner fire, no fat on which the spirit could occasionally nourish itself beyond its daily need without damage to the whole. How will the weak heart that lately

to Theodor Reik dated 4 January 1935. The full facsimile and an account of the meeting by Reik, translated into Spanish, first became available in Theodor Reik, 'Sigmund Freud y Gustavo Mahler', *Revista de Psicoanálisis* 1 (1944), 315–320; the facsimile begins on 318.

[36] 'Gustav Mahler war im letzten Jahr seines Lebens, in seiner Not und Angst, mich zu verlieren, nach Leiden zu Sigmund Freud gefahren, der ihm sagte: "Sie suchen in jeder Frau Ihre Mutter, die doch eine arme, leidende, gepeinigte Frau war …" Und weiter sagte er Mahler, "daß ich meinem Vater als geistiges Prinzip suche …", was gewiß gestimmt hatte.' Alma Mahler-Werfel, *Mein Leben* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1960), 39. My translation.

[37] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

[38] In this, the parallels with Kafka are striking: both men had 'spiritual' and distant infatuations with women (though Mahler, it seems, was not pathologically terrified of them like Kafka), both found sexual activity distressing and both demonstrated homoerotic tendencies. Franklin intimates as much for Mahler, as does de la Grange. See Franklin, *Life*, 126–127 and 172–173; Henry de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler: Vienna: The Year of Challenge (1897–1904)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 460–461.

> has troubled me so often be able to pound the blood through all the length of these legs? … Everything is pulled apart throughout the length of my body.[39]

How strikingly similar this declaration is to Mahler's observations of his 'crisis'. The relationship of the heart to the body is crucial here: the interior holds the secret of the inner weakness, hidden, but marked nonetheless onto the outer frame of the body by its wiry elongation. Its disconnectedness, the sense that everything is 'pulled apart', whilst a source of Kafka's dark comedy, also locates his familiarity with the kinds of tropes that attended the male Jewish body and which would also have attended Mahler's (self-)image. Kafka makes a reference to Mahler in his diaries, recalling a conversation from August 1911 in a coffee shop in the cathedral square in Milan with Max Brod:

> A discussion of asphyxia and [lethal] heart injection at a little table in a coffee-house on the Cathedral Square. Mahler asked for a heart injection too.[40]

Whether or not this is true is a difficult matter to settle and not of tremendous importance here. The lethal heart injection, the favoured *modus mortis* for proponents of euthanasia at the *fin de siècle*, is a powerful image and one that clearly fascinated Kafka.[41] It seems that Mahler died of subacute bacterial

[39] Quoted in (and trans.) Mark M. Anderson, *Kafka's Clothes: Ornament and Aestheticism in the Habsburg Fin de Siècle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 78. Anderson does not give the German: 'Sicher ist, daß ein Haupthindernis meines Fortschritts mein Körperlicher Zustand bildet. Mit einem solchen Körper läßt sich nichts erreichen. … Mein Körper ist zu lang für seine Schwäche, er hat nicht das geringste Fett zur Erzeugung einer segensreichen Wärme, zur Bewahrung inneren Feuers, kein Fett, von dem sich einmal der Geist über seine Tagesnotdurft hinaus ohne Schädigung des Ganzen nähren können. Wie soll das schwache Herz, das mich in der letzten Zeit öfters gestochen hat, das Blut über die ganze Länge dieser Neine hin stoßen können. … Durch die Länge des Körpers ist alles auseinandergezogen.' Max Brod (ed.), *Franz Kafka: Tagebücher 1910–1923* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1983), 126.

[40] Franz Kafka, *Diaries*, 443. 'Gespräch über Scheintod und Herzstich an einem Caféhäuschen auf dem Domplatz. Mahler hat auch den Herzstich verlangt.' *Tagebücher*, 450.

[41] The end of *The Trial* ([1920], first published Berlin: Verlag 'Die Schmeide', 1925; repr. Berlin: Fischer, 1998), whilst clearly set up as an execution, plays also with the cultural currency of euthanasia as a 'kind death': 'Aber an K.s Gurgel legten sich die Hände des einen Herrn, während der andere das Messer ihm tief ins Herz stieß und zweimal dort drehte. Mit brechenden Augen sah noch K., wie die Herren, nahe vor seinem Gesicht, Wange an Wange aneinandergelehnt, die Entscheidung beobachteten. "Wie ein Hund!" sagte er, es war, als sollte der Scham ihn überleben.' 194. For more on euthanasia, eugenics and the German *fin de siècle*, see Pascal Grosse, *Kolonialismus, Eugenik and bürgerliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland 1850–1918* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2000), especially 96–144 and 193–238.

endocarditis, an infection of the heart valve by streptococcus bacteria, probably ingested from infected food. Normally, the ingestion of the bacteria is not life-threatening, but sufferers of heart disease are particularly susceptible to this clumping of the bacteria around the heart valve, causing swelling of the valve and impeding blood flow. The death would have been agonizing and humiliating and it is not altogether out of the bounds of reality to imagine Mahler asking for this kind of relief.[42] Kafka is here seeking to locate the death of Mahler in the public discourse, a death that had already been publicly imagined a day before Mahler's death.[43] Kafka's colouring of Mahler's death with a reference to euthanasia would seem to suggest that Kafka's view of the suffering body is one in which that body is subject to public scrutiny, susceptible to public discourse, in which the very suffering is what places it into the public domain.

This expansion of the private bourgeois body into the public domain actively engages a crucial characteristic of the *fin-de-siècle* understanding of gender – its performativity.[44] For Kafka, the (public) performativity of masculinity is always connected to an imagination of the male body as both spectacle and territory, simultaneously a site for the pleasuring in the fleshly and a *place* where cultural assumptions are tested, critiqued and played out. The playing out of spectacle, a notion to which I shall return shortly, is nowhere better exemplified than in Kafka's 'artist stories' as Elizabeth Boa terms them.[45] First, however, I want to

[42] The onset of endocarditis, whilst insidious, is accompanied by malaise, night sweats, chills, aching, anorexia, weight loss, intermittent fever, headache and *dyspnea* (an acute shortness of breath); this usually leads, after a period of weeks, to the formation of embulas, accompanied by the appearance of *petechiae* (dark haemorrhagic spots) on the skin and mucous membranes, splinter haemorrhages of the fingernails, *macules* (liver spots) on the palms and soles, retinal haemorrhage and neurological consequences that manifest themselves in delirium; other late signs include swelling of the fingers and *splenomegaly* (swelling of the spleen). Death usually occurs through one or more of the following: stroke, congestive heart failure, renal failure, meningitis, subarachnoid haemorrhage and heart failure.

[43] As Franklin notes, a Vienna newspaper published a picture of Mahler's final hours the day before he died: 'a picture of Mahler on his death-bed, attended by a doctor with Alma bending over him and a Sister of Mercy in attendance at the head of his bed.' *Life*, 203.

[44] See in particular, Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990). It has become a commonplace in gender studies scholarship to construe gender as a performative operator, and yet this assertion is, in and of itself, not a sufficiently grounded observation: the particularities of that performativity are projected not just at the level of general legalistic or epistemological discourse, but also at the level of the micro-historical encounter of individuals; any claim to gender's operative coherence is thus highly problematic, always already misunderstood, located in the uncomfortable encounter of general and communal law with micro-communal experience.

[45] Boa, *Kafka*, 148ff.

look at how Kafka's imagining of masculinity (especially the male body) as a *territory* might impact on a reading of Mahler's body.

Territory: Writing/Composing

In *Brief an den Vater*, Kafka invokes an extraordinary image of a map of the world as 'covered' by his father:

> Sometimes I imagine the map of the world spread out and you stretched out right across it. And it is to me then as if I could live only in those regions which are either not covered by you or beyond your reach.[46]

This explicit articulation of the idea of territory is particularly interesting for its evocation of the monster father, resonant with the monster baby-father of *Das Urteil* and, in particular, its figuring of the hegemonic (and, by implication, the counter-hegemonic) body 'as' (or as *metonymically related to*) territory. This monstrous body, 'stretched out' over the map ['quer über sie hin ausgestreckt'], contrasts violently with Kafka's own 'meagre' ['schmal'] body: the contrast is so violent as to suggest that Kafka might here be making use of ironic hyperbole. This overdetermined physical contrast is reinforced over and over in the *Brief*:

> I was weighed down by your naked corporeality ["bloße Körperlichkeit"]. I remember, for example, how we would often go into a cabin together in order to undress. Me scrawny, weak, meagre; you strong, big, broad. In the cabin I seemed lamentable to myself, not just because of you, but because of the whole world, since you were to me the measure of all things … I was proud of my father's body.[47]

Kafka's body, 'mager, schwach, schmal', contrasted with that of his father, 'stark, groß, breit', is the Other to the hegemon's space-occupying graphism. The father, towering over the small child, stands for the fleshy physicality of hegemonic masculinity; Kafka's deviant Other-body is cramped, oppressed 'weighed

[46] 'Manchmal stelle ich mir die Erdkarte ausgespannt und Dich quer über sie hin ausgestreckt vor. Und es ist mir dann, als kämen für mein Leben nur die Gegenden in Betracht, die Du entweder nicht bedeckst oder die nicht in Deiner Reichweite liegen.' *Brief an den Vater* in *Hochzeitsvorbereitungen aud dem Lande und andere Prosa aus dem Nachlaß* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1998), 135. My translation.

[47] 'Ich war ja schon niedergedrückt durch Deine bloße Körperlichkeit. Ich erinnere mich z. B. daran, wie wir uns öfters zusammen in einer Kabine auszogen. Ich mager, schwach, schmal, Du stark, groß, breit. Schon in der Kabine kam ich mir jämmerlich vor und zwar nicht nur vor Dir, sondern vor der ganzen Welt, denn Du warst für mich das Maß aller Dinge … auch war ich stolz auf den Körper meines Vaters.' *Brief*, 123–124.

down' ('niedergedrückt') by fleshly masculinity. The figuration of territory here has not passed unnoticed in Kafka criticism. Deleuze and Guattari have noted, drawing on scant but persuasive evidence, that Kafka's language enacts a kind of 'deterritorialization'. As we have already noted, the urgent project at hand for the German-Jewish artist was to overcome the putative physical impediment of the male Jewish body as constructed in anti-Semitic discourses. Here, the idea of 'deterritorialization' takes on a highly charged political function since, in the context of a ubiquitous anti-Semitism, the slippage from the body as a 'territory' into a territory proper (from the experience of personal territory to political territory) is one of the characteristics of what Deleuze and Guattari term, after Kafka, a 'minor literature'.

The characteristics of a 'minor literature' ['eine kleine Literatur'], based on Deleuze and Guattari's reading of a long and complex letter Kafka wrote to Max Brod in June 1921,[48] and several diary entries, notably that of 25 December 1911, are centred around a view of Kafka's written German as something which is somehow distant to him, something over which he wields a mandarin, indifferent, mastery:

> The impossibility of writing in German is for the Prague Jews the feeling of an irreducible distance from their primitive Czech territoriality. And the impossibility of writing in German is the deterritorialization of the German population itself, an oppressive minority that speaks a language cut off from the masses, like a 'paper language' or an artificial language.[49]

The positing of a paper language or language of gesture (Kafka terms them 'Papierdeutsch und Gebärdensprache'[50]) is not a figure of writing that Kafka would necessarily recognize in himself but which, according to Deleuze and Guattari, nonetheless articulates something profound about Kafka's predicament:

> The problem of expression is staked out by Kafka not in an abstract and universal fashion but in relation to those literatures that are considered minor, for example, the Jewish literature of Warsaw and Prague.[51]

In essence, then, Deleuze and Guattari are interested here in the counter-hegemonic status of Kafka's writing.

The characteristics that Kafka lists for a minor literature are taken over here by Deleuze and Guattari as markers of Kafka's predicament, which I summarize below:

48 *Breife*, 334–338.

49 Deleuze and Guattari, *Toward*, 16.

50 *Briefe*, 336.

51 *Toward*, 16.

1. deterritorialization restricts the minor literature to a politicized and collectivized mode of expression;
2. the personal is always marked out and expanded into the communal;
3. in the cramped space of such a literature, there is no room for the genius effect, no masters;
4. this literature is, as Deleuze and Guattari put it, characterized by the 'collective enunciation',[52] a de-subjectifying and opening out of the writing machine into an array of anonymous expressive effects.[53]

In each of these four principles, the counter-hegemonic, 'Jewish' quality of the language is ranged against the *Hochdeutsch* of the Austrian masters and pitted against the conventions of that administrative language *from within*. Whilst many Kafka scholars have rightly criticized Deleuze and Guattari for their overemphasis on deterritorialization to the detriment of the political/communal dimension,[54] I think that there is an extraordinarily useful observation to be made here about counter-hegemonic cultural production. Conservative critics like Harold Bloom would have us embrace the putative Oedipal economy of cultural production:

> Battle between strong equals, father and son as mighty opposites, Laius and Oedipus at the crossroads; only this is my subject here, though some of the fathers, as will be seen, are composite figures. That even the strongest poets are subject to influences not poetical is obvious to me, but again my concern is only with the *poet in the poet*, or the aboriginal poetic self.[55]

This insistence on the patrilineal structuring of influence is a crucial determiner of this political economy: fathers struggle with sons in the heroic progress of the Western Canon; women and other 'deviants' like homosexuals or the fatherless are radically excluded from that progress. What Deleuze and Guattari help us to do is to dislodge this Oedipalized vision of cultural production and uncover the basis of that vision in a limited ideological foreclosure – the inscription of the

[52] *Toward*, 17.

[53] The authors only list the first three as 'characteristics' but, although my fourth characterization can be seen as an elaboration of the first three, I think this 'machinic' quality is worth a mention here as well. Kafka lists the following characteristics in the diary entry from 1911: '1. Lebhaftigkeit; a) Streit; b) Schulen; c) Zeitschriften. 2. Entlastung; a) Prinzipienlosigkeit; b) kleine Themen; c) leichte Symbolbildung; d) Abfall der Unfähigen. 3. Popularität; a) Zusammenhang mit Politik; b) Literaturgeschichte; c) Glaube an die Literatur, ihre Gesetzgebung wird ihr überlassen.' *Tagebücher*, 154.

[54] See especially Ritchie Robertson, *Kafka: Judaism, Literature and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Boa, *Kafka*, 26–28 and 244.

[55] Available in Sue Vice (ed.), *Psychoanalytic Criticism: A Reader* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 29. From *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973).

male-centred nuclear family as an immutable site of property circulation (where patrilineal cultural production works as a covering over of bourgeois-familial property relations), as an *a priori* from which there is no escape. Whatever the shortcomings of their execution of this reading of Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari's schema for the dissolution of the Oedipal logic of cultural production is productive in this context.

I want to extend this (potentially) anti-Oedipal reading of Kafka into a reading of Mahler's cultural 'predicament'. What is clearly missing here, a crucial determiner in Deleuze's and Guattari's notion of deterritorialization, is the location of Mahler in a 'linguistic island' like that of *Prager Deutsch*. Although Mahler lived his early years in Iglau (now Jihlava), the largest German-speaking Jewish town in central Bohemia, he soon left that 'island' for Vienna, the centre of the German-speaking empire, to study at the famous *Hochschule*, graduating in 1879. From then, apart from a brief period working at the German Theatre in Prague and the Royal Hungarian Opera in Budapest, Mahler lived and worked in German-speaking territories. The idea of deterritorialization, however, should not be taken as a strictly (literal) geo-political operator. That Mahler did not live most of his life in a linguistic island like Kafka's 'Prague circle'[56] is clear, but that he and Kafka may have shared a cultural predicament is something worth investigating further.

The reception of Mahler's work would seem to support arguments for the existence of a fairly generalized cultural view of his music as engaging in something like a deliberate 'deterritorialization' of the symphony. Hugo Riemann, having first mentioned Mahler in the 1905 sixth edition of the *Musiklexikon*, was particularly problematized by Mahler's symphonic writing in the seventh edition from 1909:

> Mahler is at the moment one of the best-known opera conductors, and has generated some interest with his compositions; these nonetheless lack any stronger individuality and are simply the result of a routine eclecticism.[57]

And he was content, in the posthumously published 1922 edition (edited by Alfred Einstein) to expound an anti-Semitic reading of what he termed Mahler's 'Bekenntniskunst' (confessional art):

[56] According to Scott Spector, 'This image of the Prague "island" is a persistent one, as is the corresponding metaphor of the circle'. *Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka's Fin de Siècle* (Berkeley, CA: California University Press, 2000), 8.

[57] 'Mahler ist zur Zeit als einer der ersten Operndirigenten allgemein anerkannt, weckte auch mit seinen Kompositionen Interesse; doch entbehren dieselben stärker Eigenart und sind nur Erzeugnisse eines routinirten Eklektizismus.' Hugo Riemann, *Musiklexikon* (7th edn; Leipzig, 1909), 859. My translation.

> Mahler's *Symphonik*, which in its origins springs from song, is indifferent to the so-called originality of expression, [indifferent to] to the kinds of choices involved in his *Thematik*, such that I have come to believe myself permitted to expel Mahler from the ranks of creative musicians – also on racial grounds (Mahler was a Jew). Mahler is in reality simultaneously primitive and complex; his music is a kind of confessional art that again wants to turn to an unmediated feeling of universality without being able to deceive itself as to this violation of its nature – of one born late, at the end of a cultural era. The attempt to overcome this dualism explains the feverishness ["Krampfhaftigkeit"] of this music, in which romanticism experiences its last disintegration.[58]

The dualism of 'primitive and complex', which Riemann so brutally outlines here, is a marker of a deviant atavism, a feverish mourning for the passing of the old romantic order, one in which 'universal feelings' are barred by this music's very genus. Often, the accusation of 'falseness' or, here, a 'violation' of one's given nature masks over a thinly drawn set of preferences for the 'difficult' or 'worthy' musics of the canon over the apparently 'frivolous' or, worse, the 'popular'. I think it is possible to detect a veiled disdain for what might be perceived as 'populist' or 'affective' musics in this tirade against Mahler's putative atavism: the accusation is one that resonates with other aristocratic Modernist critiques of musics that 'pander' to the 'masses' – Mahler's music is deficient for its overdetermined sense of the public. Riemann inflects his critique of Mahler's music with a sense of its devious outsider quality: be careful, he may seem like one of you, but he is not! In this sense, Mahler is figured as a charlatan or alien; he is not a properly 'German' child, but one thrown into German culture, 'stolen' into it, masquerading as one of its own. Mahler's status is thus one of dangerous competence – of one who may bring the edifice of German culture crashing down around its gatekeepers' ears through its 'clever' mocking. This is a notion that Deleuze and Guattari return to again and again in their reading of Kafka:

> The literary machine thus becomes the relay for a revolutionary machine-to-come, not at all for ideological reasons but because the literary machine alone is determined to fill the conditions of a collective enunciation that is lacking

[58] 'Mahlers Symphonik, die in ihren Anfängen aus dem Liedschaffen herauswächst, ist von einer Gleichgültigkeit der Thematik, daß man Mahler – aus Rassegründen (Mahler was Jude) aus der Reihe der schöpferischen Musiker gänzlich zu stoßen dürfen geglaubt hat. Mahler ist in Wirklichkeit primitiv und kompliziert zugleich; seine Musik ist Bekenntniskunst, die wieder unmittelbar sich an das Gefühl der Allgemeinheit wenden möchte, ohne sich über den Bruch des Wesens des spät, am Ende eines Kulturablaufs Geborenene täuschen zu können. Bei dem Versuch, diesen Dualismus zu überwinden, erklärt sich die ekstatische Krampfhaftigkeit dieser Musik, in der die Romantik ihre letzte Zersetzung erlebt.' Hugo Riemann, *Musiklexikon*, ed. by Albert Einstein (9th edn; Leipzig, 1922), 772. My translation.

> elsewhere in this milieu: *literature is the people's concern*. It is certainly in these terms that Kafka sees the problem. The message doesn't refer back to an enunciating subject who would be its cause, no more than to a subject of the statement (*sujet d'énoncé*) who would be its effect. Undoubtedly, for a while, Kafka thought according to these traditional categories of the two subjects, the author and the hero, the narrator and the character, the dreamer and the one dreamed of. But he will quickly reject the role of the narrator, just as he will refuse an author's or master's literature, despite his admiration for Goethe.[59]

Mahler's symphonic writing seems, for Riemann, to exemplify the danger of this kind of deterritorialization: the erosion of the subject, its dissipation into anonymous expressive effects that jostle for our attention. The kind of 'subject' that Riemann is prepared to acknowledge in Mahler is a degraded secondary subject, the self of a sentimental confessional art: this complaint against Mahler's art as a 'confessional' is striking since, in other contexts, one can imagine Riemann enthralled by the putative sounding-subjectivity of a 'confessional' late Beethoven; this complaint seems to suggest that there is something overly performative, false, indulgent, over-articulate, smart even, about Mahler's music. Indeed, as Christoph Metzger has recently observed, with the ever-increasing popularity of Mahler's music, Riemann's invective intensifies accordingly.[60]

Moreover, the notion that Mahler's symphonic imagination is one founded somehow in song engages another dualism of which German-speaking commentators on musical matters in the nineteenth century were fond – vocal music vs 'absolute' music. In the context of the ongoing articulation, by formalists like Riemann and Hanslick, of absolute music as a special or privileged site of cultural value, the connection of Mahler's *Symphonik* to an origin in 'song' is clearly meant to demean. To uproot this view and examine it anew in the light of Deleuze's theories is to recognize a strand of thought that wants to exclude Mahler's music from the canon by virtue of its hybridity and its tendency to openly examine cultural difference, a striking analogue to Kafka's own criterion for *kleine Literatur*:

> What in great literature goes on down below, constituting a not indispensable cellar of the structure, here takes place in the full light of day, what is there a matter of passing interest for a few, here absorbs everyone no less than as a matter of life and death.[61]

[59] *Toward*, 18.

[60] Christoph Metzger, *Mahler-Rezeption: Perspektiven der Rezeption Gustav Mahlers* (Wilhelmshaven: Florian Noetzel Verlag, 2000), 144.

[61] 'Was innerhalb großer Literaturen unten sich abspielt und einen nicht unentbehrlichen Keller des Gebäudes bildet, geschieht hier im vollen Licht, was dort einen augenblicksweisen Zusammenlauf entstehen läßt, führt hier nichts weniger als die

The life and death absorption in matters collective is reflected in Kafka's use of figured popular cultural forms such as the circus as sites of extraordinarily complex and pressing cultural work: these forms take on both an ironized 'frivolous' and a 'serious' complex-discursive articulation and it is in the tension between the two that Kafka situates his writing. The engagement of popular art forms in this manner is something that commentators have consistently recognized in Mahler's output. Other commentators take a view similar to that of Riemann or activate similar tropes: in his *Führer durch den Konzertsaal*, Hermann Kretzschmar, Schenker's *bête noir*, questions the generic assuredness of the eighth symphony as a symphony:

> This enormous occupation ["Besetzung"] of the symphony is no indispensable requirement; it has an effect, for what it's worth, even with some 150 or 200 heads, but it is no symphony, it is a cantata.[62]

The image of Mahler 'occupying' the symphony recalls Mahler's reference to his 'new body' or Kafka's Gypsy-abduction of the German child that is 'nothing', just 'someone dancing'. Clearly, generic hybridity can also work here as a marker of the racial and cultural chameleon. Like Riemann, Hermann Abert also notes the song-like quality of Mahler's *Symphonik* and sees in it a telling discrepancy between the man and the artist, another marker, despite Abert's positive tone, of the artificial or 'false' nature of Mahler's music: the art is somehow not owned or 'felt' by the artist.[63] Johannes Wolf noted how the 'banal stands next to the worthy' in Mahler's music and Hans Joachim Moser, later member of the NSDAP (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, the Nazi Party), denigrated Mahler as the producer of parochial 'Kapellmeistermusik'.[64]

A particularly rich instance of Mahler reception can be found in Guido Adler's monumental *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte* (1924), in which the hybridity of Mahler's music is foregrounded:

> His music contains no programme, but harbours philosophical and metaphysical problems. He has been reproached for the sounding metaphysics of his music.

Entscheidung über Leben und Tod aller herbei.' *Briefe*, 153. English translation quoted in Deleuze and Guattari, *Toward*, 17.

[62] 'Diese enorme Besetzung der Symphonie ist keine unentbehrliche Bedingung, sie wirkt, soweit sie Wert hat, auch mit 150 und 200 Köpfen, aber sie ist keine Symphonie, sondern eine Kantate.' Hermann Kretzschmar, *Führer durch den Konzertsaal* (4th edn: Leipzig, 1919), volume 1, 811. My translation.

[63] Hermann Abert, *Illustriertes Musiklexikon* (Stuttgart, 1927), 731: 'Ihre Zerrissenheit enthüllt nur den Zwiespalt zwischen Mensch und Künstler,' quoted in Metzger, *Mahler-Rezeption*, 147. My translation.

[64] Hans Joachim Moser, 'Kapellmeistermusik'. *Musiklexikon* (2nd edn; Berlin, 1943), 526, quoted in Metzger, *Mahler-Rezeption*, 150. My translation.

> But it is precisely in the last years of the nineteenth century that the schism between the real and unreal worlds became so stark such that it is inevitably reflected in his music as a struggle for resolutions. Tragedy and humour, irony and banality rub up against one another as they did for the romantics; Mahler's music embraces also the realm of nature. Naivety and sentiment are coupled with the overrefinement of expression.[65]

The putative markers of popular culture – humour, banality – are deliberately juxtaposed here with markers of bourgeois refinement – tragedy, expression – in a characterization of Mahler as the voice of an age in turmoil, where reality and unreality are haemorrhaging into each other. This collapsing duality is crucial also to Kafka's oeuvre and finds eloquent and ubiquitous expression in his idiosyncratic ruminations on 'politics':

> Even though something is often thought through calmly, one still does not reach the boundary where it connects up with similar things, one reaches the boundary soonest in politics, indeed one even strives to see it before it is there, and often sees this limiting boundary everywhere.[66]

This degraded or counter-hegemonic politics, situated between the cracks of Kafka's ostensible *Thematik*, is grounded in the obscene counter-logic of the mocking insurgent: unprincipled, dislocated, profane, rootless; self-projections which Kafka is all too happy to perform back to his anti-Semitic audience.

The View from the Gallery

It seems that Kafka was obsessed, in ways that strike a chord with Mahler's attitude to his own work, with writing as a kind of performance.[67] Mahler's attitude to his work is one characterized by a performative anxiety. It is not that this 'anxiety' is not real or is simply affected, but rather that Mahler, like many of his contemporaries, was well aware of the performative qualities of writing, especially the public discursive quality of letters at the Habsburg *fin de siècle*. This performative anxiety intensifies in Mahler's letters after the diagnosis of his heart

[65] Guido Adler, *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte* (1st edn; Berlin, 1924; 2nd edn, 1930), volume 2, 1906. My translation.

[66] 'Wenn auch die einzelne Angelegenheit oft mit Ruhe durchgedacht wird, so kommt man doch nicht bis an ihre Grenzen, an denen sie mit gleichartigen Angelegenheiten zusammenhängt, am ehesten erreicht man die Grenze gegenüber der Politik, ja man strebt sogar danach, diese Grenze früher zu sehen, als sie da ist, und oft diese sich zusammenziehende Grenze überall zu finden.' *Briefe*, 153. English translation quoted in Deleuze and Guattari, *Toward*, 17.

[67] See Boa, *Kafka*, 156–180.

condition in 1907. The anxiety thus seems very real, but it is always coded in ways that recognize the mediality of the letter and its public conventions:

> Now I am supposed to avoid every exertion, monitor myself constantly, not walk much. At the same time, in this solitude, where I am inwardly aware, I feel all the more clearly what is not in order in my physical being. Perhaps my outlook is altogether too black – but I feel worse since coming to the country than I did in the city, where distraction deceptively covered over much … At the same time I have made a curious observation. I can do nothing but work; over the course of the years I have forgotten how to do anything else. It's as though I were a morphine addict or a drunkard to whom one forbade his vice all at once.[68]

As one would expect, the first person dominates the 'narrative' and it is worth noting that the sentences omitted here after 'covered over much' are also overwhelmingly in the first person.[69] This view of the writing process as driven by addiction, automaton-like and played out both in the letter-writing itself and in Mahler's account of composing the score for *Das Lied*, engages a commonplace figuration of creative production at the *fin de siècle* in an effacement of universal production: letter-writing is now the reproduction of letter-writing conventions, and that reproduction is proposed here as a machine-like enactment of cultural predisposition, of *doing what's culturally expected*. Within this machinic (medialized) logic of cultural production, automatic writing, objectification, medialization, in short, 'die Umwertung aller Werte', to quote Nietzsche, are commonplace operators.[70]

[68] 'Nun soll ich jede Anstrengung meiden, mich beständig kontrollieren, nicht viel gehen. Zugleich fühle ich in dieser Einsamkeit, wo ich nach innen aufmerksam bin, alles deutlicher, was in meinem Physischen nicht in Ordnung ist. Vielleicht sehe ich sogar zu schwarz – aber ich fühle mich, seitdem ich auf dem Land bin, schlechter als in der Stadt, wo auch die Zerstreuung über manches wegtäuschte. … Zugleich mache ich eine sonderbare Bemerkung. Ich kann nichts als arbeiten, alles andere habe ich im Laufe der Jahre verlernt. Mir ist wie einem Morphinisten oder einem Potator, dem man mit einem Schlage sein Laster verbietet.' Quoted in Karl-Josef Müller, *Mahler: Leben, Werke,* Dokumente (Mainz: Schott Verlag, 1989), 484–485; Knud Martner (ed.), *Selected Letters of Gustav Mahler* (New York: Faber and Faber, 1979), 321–322; a letter to Bruno Walter from the summer of 1908 (no. 372). Translation based on Stephen E. Hefling: *Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 33.

[69] 'So I can't report much that's cheerful to you, and for the first time in my life I wish my vacation was over. It is fabulous here; if only once in my life I could enjoy such things after the completion of a work! For that, as you yourself will know, is the only moment in which one is truly capable of enjoyment.' Ibid.

[70] See Friedrich Kittler, *Aufschreibesysteme 1800/1900* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1985), 259: 'Im Aufschreibesystem 1900 sind Diskurse Outputs von ZUFALLSGENERATOREN. Die Konstruktion solcher Rauschquellen fällt der

In his letters, Kafka makes several references to Mahler's composing regimen and the famous composing huts. He was clearly fascinated by the relationship between his own writing regimen and what he could glean from written accounts of Mahler's regimen. In one such reference, complaining in July 1922 to Felix Weltsch about constant interruptions from the noise from a circular saw, Kafka recalls a description he had read somewhere of Mahler's work regimen:

> I think about Mahler, whose summer routine ["Sommerleben"] was described somewhere as getting up at 5.30, he was very healthy then and slept very well, bathing in the open, running into the wood where he had his 'composing-hut' (breakfast would have already been prepared) and working there until 1, and the trees which make so much noise under the saw, stood around him in a crowd and blocked out the noise. (In the afternoon he then slept and only from 4 did he spend time with his family and only seldom was his wife lucky enough that he betrayed ["verriet"] any details of his morning's work.) But I wanted to tell you about the saw ["von der Säge erzählen"]. I alone cannot escape it, my sister must come and, at unbelievable inconvenience to her, tidy the other room for me (which is also no composing hut, but I don't want to talk about that), and then I am free of the saw for a while. In this way, one has to move yourself [*sic*] into a quiet room.[71]

The German word for a saw, *Säge*, resonates here with the German word for a tale or saga, *Sage*. The saw is a transplantation (deterritorialization) of the orality (from 'sagen', 'to say') of the *Sage* into the *noise* of the machine used in the production of paper, a reduction of the *Erzählen* of a *Sage* to the emptied out noises of material production. In the second reference, in a letter to Brod a few days later in the same month (July 1922), Kafka repeats his reference to Mahler's composing hut:

Psychophysik zu, ihre Speicherung neuen technischen Medien, die psychophysiche Meßwerte als Apparate implementierten.'

[71] 'ich denke an Mahler, dessen Sommerleben irgendwo beschrieben war, wie er täglich um halb sechs, er war damals sehr gesund und schlief ausgezeichnet, im Freien badete und dann in den Wald lief, wo er er eine "Komponier-Hütte" hatte (das Frühstück war dort schon vorbereitet) und bis ein Uhr mittag dort arbeitete und die Bäume, die später in der Säge so viel Lärm machen, in Mengen still und lärmbewehrend um ihn standen. (Nachmittags schlief er dann und erst von vier Uhr an lebte er mit seiner Familie und nur selten hatte seine Frau das Glück, daß er etwas von seiner Morgenarbeit verriet.) Aber ich wollte von der Säge erzählen. Ich allein komme von ihr nicht los, es muß die Schwester kommen und unter unglaublichen Bequemlichkeitsopfern ihrerseits das andere Zimmer mir einräumen (das allerdings auch keine Komponierhütte ist, aber davon will ich nicht sprechen), nun bin ich für eine Zeit die Säge los. So müßte man Dich auch einmal in ein stilles Zimmer hinüberführen.' Kafka, *Briefe*, 389. My translation.

> You ask me about the wood, the wood is beautiful, one can find peace there, but no "composing hut". A path through the (still very diverse) wood in the evening, when the noise of the birds is somewhat muted (in Mahler's place, the birds would perhaps have disturbed me).[72]

The fascination with noise here enacts a deterritorialization of the creative subject into a figure in a (sonic) landscape, acted upon by external forces in distinct contrast to the great Romantic idealized creative self, an earlier proxy for the great universal narrative of cultural production. According to Bruno Walter, Mahler was indeed subjected to noisy external interference:

> He was suddenly frightened by an indefinable noise. All at once, "something terribly dark" came rushing through the window and, when he jumped in horror, he saw that he was in the presence of an eagle which filled the room with its violence. The fearsome meeting was quickly over and the eagle disappeared as stormily as it had come. When Mahler sat down, exhausted by his fright, a crow came fluttering from under the sofa and flew out. The peaceful abode of musical absorption had become a battle-ground upon which one of innumerable fights of "all against all" had taken place. Mahler's account of it still tingled with the horror of so striking a demonstration of the cruelty of nature which had ever been one of the reasons for his deep world-sorrow.[73]

This apocryphal tale, tinged deliciously with a gothic frisson, once again makes the same culturally located claim about the nature of creative production: not the heroic struggles of the romantic, not the communing with the forces of nature and spirituality that the pious early romantic aesthetic projects, but an oppressed, easily manipulated body-figure, locked away in painful sensitivity to noise, forever struggling to find the perfect productive regimen:

> I sat at my nice writing desk. You don't know it. Why should you. It is in fact a good, respectably minded desk, one that educates. In the place where the writer's knees generally go, it has two terrifying wooden spikes. And so look out. If one seats oneself quietly, carefully, and writes something nice and respectable, then one is fine. But woe, if one becomes agitated and the body trembles just a bit, then one unavoidably has the points in the knees, and how that hurts. I could

[72] 'Du fragst nach dem Wald, der Wald ist schön, dort kann man Ruhe finden, aber keine "Komponierhütte". Ein Gang durch den (übrigens sehr mannigfaltigen) Wald am Abend, wenn der Lärm der Vögel sich dämpft (an Mahlers Stelle hätten mich vielleicht die Vögel gestrört).' *Briefe*, 394. My translation.

[73] Bruno Walter, *Gustav Mahler* (Vienna, 1936), quoted in Hefling, *Lied*, 35.

> show you the black and blue marks. And what is that supposed to mean, but "write nothing agitating and so do not let your body tremble".[74]

This image of writing as an anonymizing process that can somehow damage the body speaks both of a new poetics (a counter-Oedipal politics of writing) and the precarious material conditions of the outsider artist: Kafka's fascination for this process, and Mahler's implication in it, is a critical marker of the counter-hegemonic creative masculinity of the male Jew. Creative production, still tinged at the *fin de siècle* with the putative 'femininity' of the over-sensibility of the male artist, is also marked now by a dangerous racial contaminant (dangerous, that is, for both those who recognize it and those who are marked by it): gender fluidity and anxieties about creative masculinities are touched with the mark of a fundamentally different genus that must erode itself, make itself as small as possible, hide itself inside the master language, play act its hegemony, whilst ironizing that very act of playing – the performativity of creative production works in Mahler and Kafka as a deadly serious self-effacement.

As a kind of emptied-out performance of the production process, performative writing is crucial to Kafka's *oeuvre*, especially the 'artist works'. There is a short prose fragment that serves as an exemplar of this group of texts, all of which rehearse many of the cultural anxieties that attend the public/private (or as we shall shortly see here, spectacle/reverie) dualism and deal, in particular, with creative production as dangerous 'predicament'. In 1914, three years after Mahler's death, Kafka began work on a short prose fragment, which he completed some time in 1917 and to which Kafka's editor Max Brod later gave the title 'Auf der Galerie'.[75] The fragment is reproduced here in full:

> If some frail consumptive equestrienne were to be forced round and round in the circus ring on a swaying horse for months on end before an insatiable public by a cruel Ringmaster with a whip, whizzing round on the horse, blowing kisses, swaying at the waist, and if the performance were to be continued to the unceasing roar of the orchestra and the ventilators into an ever widening grey future, accompanied by the ebbing and swelling applause which are actually

[74] A letter to Oskar Pollak, 24 August, 1902: 'Ich saß an meinem schönen Schreibtisch. Du kennst ihn nicht. Wie solltest Du auch. Das ist nämlich ein gut bürgerlich gesinnter Schreibtisch, der erziehen soll. Der hat dort, wo gewöhnlich die Knie des Schreibers sind, zwei erschreckliche Holzspitzen. Und nun gib acht. Wenn man sich ruhig setzt, vorsichtig, und etwas gut Bürgerliches schreibt, dann ist einem wohl. Aber wehe, wenn man sich aufregt und der Körper nur ein wenig bebt, dann hat man unausweichlich die Spitzen in den Knien und wie das schmerzt. Ich könnte Dir dunkelblauen Flecken zeigen. Und was will das nun bdeuten: "Schreibe nichts Aufgeregtes und laß Deinen Körper nicht zittern dabei".' *Briefe*, 11, trans. by Spector, *Territories*, 2.

[75] First published in Franz Kafka, *Ein Landarzt. Kleine Erzählungen* (Munich: Kurt Wolff Verlag, 1919).

> steam hammers – perhaps then a young visitor to the gallery would rush down the steps through all the circles, plummet into the ring and shout "Stop!" over the fanfares of the incessant accompanying orchestra.
>
> Since this is not so; a beautiful young woman, white and red, comes flying in through the curtains which the proud liveries open for her; the master, deferentially seeking her eyes, breathing animal devotion, lifts her carefully onto the dapple-grey horse as if she were his beloved granddaughter about to embark on a dangerous journey; can barely bring himself to give the sign; eventually gives it with a crack of the whip; runs alongside the horse with open mouth; follows the rider's leaps with sharp glances; can barely grasp her artfulness; gives English cries of warning; exhorts the grooms holding the hoops to be painfully attentive; implores the orchestra to be silent before the somersault; and finally takes the little one down from the shaking horse, kisses her on both cheeks and accepts not even the highest praise from the public for her; whilst she, supported by him, high on her toes, in a flurry of dust with arms outstretched, her little head leant back, wants to share her triumph with the whole circus – since this is so, the visitor to the gallery lays his head on the rail and, in the final march, as if sinking into a heavy dream, he weeps, without knowing it.[76]

[76] 'Wenn irgendeine hinfällige lungensüchtige Kunstreiterin in der Manege auf schwankendem Pferd vor einem unermüdlichen Publikum vom peitschenschwingenden erbarmungslosen Chef monatelang ohne Unterbrechung im Kreise rundum getrieben würde, auf dem Pferde schwirrend, Küsse werfend, in der Taille sich wiegend, und wenn dieses Spiel unter dem nichtaussetzenden Brausen des Orchesters und der Ventilatoren in die immerfort weiter sich öffnende graue Zukunft sich fortsetzte, begleitet vom vorgehenden und neu anschwellenden Beifallsklatschen der Hände, die eigentlich Dampfhämmer sind – vielleicht eilte dann ein junger Galeriebesucher die lange Treppe durch alle Ränge hinab, stürzte in die Manege, riefe das: Halt! durch die Fanfaren des immer sich anpassenden Orchesters.

Da es aber nicht so ist; eine schöne Dame, weiß und rot, hereinfliegt, zwischen den Vorhängen, welche die stolzen Livrierten vor ihr öffnen; der Direktor, hingebungsvoll ihre Augen suchend, in Tierhaltung ihr entgegenatmet; vorsorglich sie auf den Apfelschimmel hebt, als wäre sie seine über alles geliebte Enkelin, die sich auf gefährliche Fahrt begibt; sich nicht entschliessen kann, das Peitschenzeichen zu geben; schließlich in Selbstüberwindung es knallend gibt; neben dem Pferde mit offenem Munde einherläuft; die Sprünge der Reiterin scharfen Blickes verfolgt; ihre Kunstfertigkeit kaum begreifen kann; mit englischen Ausrufen zu warnen versucht; die reifenhaltenden Reitknechte wütend zu peinlichster Achtsamkeit ermahnt; vor dem großen Saltomortale das Orchester mit aufgehobenen Händen beschwört, es möge schweigen; scließlich die Kleine vom zitternden Pferde hebt, auf beide Backen küßt und keine Huldigung des Publikums für genügend erachtet; während sie selbst, von ihm gestützt, hoch auf den Fußspitzen, vom Staub umweht, mit ausgebreiteten Armen, zurückgelehntem Köpfchen ihr Glück mit dem ganzen Zirkus teilen will – da dies so ist, legt der Galeriebesucher das Gesicht auf die Brüstung und, im Schlußmarsch wie in einem schweren Traum versinkend, weint er, ohne

I shall return to the figuration of music in the fragment shortly but for the moment I want to address its 'writerly-performative' quality. The structuring of the text around two incompatible narratives works as a critical play on the epistemological groundedness of authoriality and subject positioning. This critical pleasuring in the ambiguation of the authorial/narrating voice also engages at least two incompatible 'types' of masculinity: the 'active' (but, perhaps, deluded) masculine hero and the passive (but, perhaps, less deluded, less aggrandized) weeping observer. The two paragraphs effect this duality through both narrative and indexical means: for Roland Barthes, the structure of narrative is usefully articulated through what he terms nuclei or 'kernels', events in the narrative that are crucial for that narrative's cohesion – events that cannot be dispensed with if the narrative (or *diegesis*) is transposed from one medium to another; the index is a medium-specific operator that fleshes out the bones of the chain of nuclei through an accumulative action, grounding the diegesis in the medium of its telling.[77] What is significant here is the way in which Kafka attempts to subvert this functional duality (a duality articualted by Lukács as the difference between 'Beschreiben' and 'Erzählen',[78] finding a useful complement in Jakobson's 'metaphor/metonomy' duality[79]) by fundamentally integrating the *telling* of the diegesis into its *writing*: Kafka heaps writerly (medium-specific) indices onto the telling such that it is inseparable from its writing, inseparable from its qualitative grounding as a specific mediality.

This classically 'modernist' gesture – the intense medialization of an apparently universally translatable 'message' – is also readable as a set of quite specific meditations on cultural agency, gender and the location of what David Schwarz has termed the 'listening subject'.[80] The first paragraph plays out a hyperbolically 'Freudian' narrative of masculine agency. The father proxy in the ring must at all costs be vanquished by the young visitor in order to save (win) the suffering sexualized (consumptive) equestrienne from her brutalization at the hands of the monstrous father. The equestrienne stands as the cipher of *Verkehr*[81] between the two men, a 'transaction' that helps mark the patrilineal and Oedipal ground of

es zu wissen.' Franz Kafka, 'Auf der Galerie', in Max Brod (ed.), *Erzählungen* (Franfkurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1998), 117–8. My translation.

[77] Roland Barthes, 'Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives', in *Image–Music–Text*, reprinted in Susan Sontag (ed.), *A Barthes Reader* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1982), 251–295.

[78] Georg Lukács, 'Erzählen oder Beschreiben? Zur Diskusion über Naturalismus und Formalismus', *Essays über Realismus* (Berlim: Aufbau, 1948).

[79] Roman Jakobson, trans. by Georg Friedrich Meier, 'Der Doppelcharakter der Sprache und die Polarität zwischen Metaphorik und Metonymik', in Anselm Haverkamp (ed.), *Theorie der Metapher* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1996), 163–174.

[80] David Schwarz, *Listening Subjects: Music, Psychoanalysis, Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

[81] For an extended analysis of this term in Kafka's oeuvre, see Anderson, *Clothes*, especially 131–134 and 161–169.

masculinity and the woman's place in that transaction as *Waaren* (literally 'goods' or ware). The visitor is thus able to activate his masculinity by penetrating the membrane of the circle along a teleological vector; the trauma of this violent action is marked by a sudden (putative) silencing of the music with a shout of 'Stop!'. This shout, 'durch die Fanfaren des immer sich anpassenden Orchesters' ('over the fanfares of the incessant accompanying orchestra'), rises above the degraded *Alltagsmusik* of the circus in order to figure the visitor as the bearer of a reproachful, 'higher', cultural counter-capital. Moreover, not only does the visitor traverse the boundary of the ring, but he 'plunges' into it: 'stürzte in die Manege' (literally 'would tumble, fall or plunge', continuing the conditional mood). This precipitous drop into the ring adds to the sense of trauma at the visitor's incursion, which, within the Freudian logic that this paragraph sets up, is a hyperbolic (pathological) overstatement of the act of penetration.[82]

The epistemological trajectory of this paragraph is underscored by the deployment of a range of figurations of sonic materials which draw on contemporaneous imaginations of the music/noise dualism. In this first paragraph, sound(/music) engages a complex array of tropes. On the one hand, it helps characterize the paragraph as 'monstrous' through the Orchestra's cacophonous *Brausen*: incessant, it churns out stock fanfares, and the other noises generated by inhuman mechanisms – ventilators, steam hammers – are indexical expansions of the core image of a merely utilitarian ('commercial') music. On the other hand, sound functions as the sonic channelling of two opposing engagements of power – (i) the patriarchal monstrous brutilization of the equestrienne marked by the *Brausen* and (ii) the traumatic 'Stop!' of the visitor – both marked by a character-giving utilization of sound, *accompaniment* vs *voice*. In this duality of inside/outside, the first engagement of power is environmental in character, part of a circular, circumscribed 'inner' territory of degradation that locates the father proxy at that centre, wielding a range of masculine cultural resources that are simultaneously canonic (masculine strength, the driver of the action) and dissident (cruel, brutal). Sound marks this territory by 'accompanying' the action, figuring it as a degrading sadomasochistic spectacle that can be ordered for its audience by the addition of sonic markers, like a perverse Hollywood narrative, accompanied by a 'hidden' post-Wagnerian orchestra. The second engagement of power is a highly charged singular act of 'sounding out', carried on the voice, a mark of exemplary masculine subjectivity, but also the duplicitous bearer of a masculinity in crisis: vocal production, as I have demonstrated elsewhere,[83] contrary to Derrida's observations,[84] can be seen at the *fin de siècle* as a supplement to the

[82] See Freud's 'Vorwort' to Maxim Steiner's *Die psychischen Störungen der Männlichen Potenz* (Leipzig, 1913) in Freud, *Gesammelte Werke*, volume 10, 415ff.

[83] See my 'Vox electronica: Nostalgia, irony and cyborgian vocalities in Kraftwerk's *Radioaktivität* and *Autobahn*', *Twentieth-Century Music* 1(1) (2004), 81–100.

[84] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), especially 6–26.

canonical mediacy (mediality) of writing where, as Sarah Webster Goodwin amongst others has shown, 'voicing out' draws attention to the sonorous body and is therefore dangerous in that it is grounded in the delicate body-physical, that privileged (and demeaned) site of the feminine in the nineteenth-century misogynistic imagination:

> Curse, cry, silence: all are forms of expression that signify through indirection, and that, like song, inhabit the body without fully leaving it, in contrast to the "voice" of the written word. What we see here then is a pattern: male poet/ female prostitute, with the prostitute's cry of pain, or her silence, occasioning the poet's voice.[85]

What Goodwin recognizes in Wordsworth, stands, transformed, in Kafka for an atavistic but ironic 'recuperation' of a model of masculinity lost in the great administration of the law, lost to the figure of the impresario mediator – voice as a last hope in the face of the brutalizing anonymity of public masculinity, commercial culture, mechanized production.

Yet all this is not so. Or so the next paragraph would seem to suggest. The sudden eruption of the indicative mood is traumatic: as Boa puts it, 'the thudding syllables come as hammer blows to destroy the speculative edifice of a possible story',[86] and it is no accident that Boa should reach for the metaphor of hammer blows, resonating the ironic hyperbolic 'Zarathustran' masculinity of the first paragraph and thereby underlining the epistemological incongruity of the second with it. This paragraph, by positing a second epistemologically dissonant version of events alongside the first, forces the narratee to rethink the reliability of the first paragraph fundamentally. It is thus tempting to think of the story as presenting two realities, one false and one true, the first paragraph clearly a fiction, the second marked as 'real' by the indicative mood. Yet this reading assumes a simple mapping of verbal mood to narrator reliability which, I suggest, is difficult to sustain in the light of Kafka's use of language here: whereas the 'truth' of the first is questioned by the conditional mood and by the overblown heroism of the young visitor with its hyperbolic Freudian sexual circus, the second is called into question by the dream-like tone of the language. It is unfolded, almost as if in slow motion, in a long chain of clauses, all of which relate back to a single grammatical subject – the adoring grandfather figure ['der Direktor … vorsorglich sie auf den Apfelschimmel hebt … sich nicht entschliessen kann, das Peitschenzeichen zu geben … neben dem Pferd mit offenem Munde einherläuft']. This relay of clauses fixed to a single subject is a masterful writerly play on the German structuring of

[85] Sarah Webster Goodwin, 'Wordsworth and Romantic voice: the poet's song and the prostitute's cry', in Leslie C. Dunn and Nancy A. Jones (eds), *Embodied Voices: Representing Female Vocality in Western Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 65–79: 70.

[86] Boa, *Kafka*, 4.

the clause around verb positioning, the closure of each link in the chain marked by the finite verb, heaping narrative action upon action to draw out the narrative line, and the narratee with it, towards an expected closure; but that closure is attenuated; the equestrienne takes her bow and, in the strange dislocated coda marked out from the rest of the paragraph by a hyphen, a characteristically dissident use of punctuation, the visitor to the gallery weeps 'without knowing it'. The beautiful strangeness of this ending, its pointed and studied ambiguity, brings one to rethink the simplicity of the unreality/reality dualism, and to call that binarism into question, to leave the boundary between the two porous.

As in the first paragraph, the content of the second is underscored by references to sonic materials, and, like in the first paragraph, those materials help flesh out a pointed juxtaposition of active and passive masculinities by recognizing two kinds of sound – *voice* and *accompaniment*; however, it is the ringmaster who has ownership of the voice here, crying 'English words of warning', 'exhorting' the groom to be careful, and, like the visitor with his 'Stop!' of the first paragraph, he implores the orchestra to be silent. The silencing of the orchestra here underscores the epistemological dissonance between the two paragraphs: in the first, the voice is owned by the visitor and engaged as a reproach to the banality and cruelty of the circus; in the second, the voice is commanded by the ringmaster, and is engaged to structure the audience's (narratee's) attention, drawing it to his 'kleine Enkelin', the skilful equestrienne, by the silencing of the orchestra. In the strange coda, moreover, the visitor sinks 'in the final march as if into a heavy dream', activating that commonplace trope of music as a place where subjectivity is lost, a place of dangerous and debilitating pleasures.[87] The music operates here like a 'sonorous envelope':

> The all-round pleasure of listening to music is one of many "oceanic" fantasies (some pleasurable, displeasurable, or ambivalent) such as sleeping, swimming, having sex, being absorbed by a movie, by a religious experience, by a landscape, etc. Although these fantasies are quite different from one another in obvious ways, they share a common feature: the boundary separating the body from the external world seems dissolved or crossed in some way.[88]

David Schwarz has put his finger on something very profound here – there is a continuing tendency in the post-Enlightenment Western European imagination of music to perceive it as a way of 'transforming' or temporarily suspending everyday modes of being, of moving beyond the mundane into a higher (or at least different) state of consciousness. In Kafka, this tendency takes on an ironic or critical edge: the great post-Schopenhauerian articulation of music as a kind of narcotic is here

[87] On the ubiquity of this trope, see Lawrence Kramer, 'From the abject to the other', in *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 33–66, especially 56–57.

[88] Schwarz, *Subjects*, 7.

blocked by the crossing and cancelling out of exit trajectories. One way leads to the ludicrous over-articulation of masculinity in the plunging thrusting 'Stop!' of the first paragraph by the (assumed) silencing of the music; the second leads to a debilitated, foreclosed masculinity, in which the music envelops the visitor and returns him to a womb-like state in which 'crying without knowing it' marks his infantilization, an abject returning to the semiotic.[89] In both instances, the 'way out' is barred.

The View from the Podium

Kafka's prose fragment 'Auf der Galerie' enacts a kind of obscene politics of reproach in which idealistic vanity, the belief in some kind of 'way out', is radically maligned. Yet this is no bourgeois pessimism as Lukács would have it, no turning inward away from the world: it is precisely the *refusal* of idealism that grounds Kafka's project. And, I want to contend, it is this same refusal that grounds Mahler's project. As we have seen, a common trope that runs through the reception of Mahler's music is the 'dualism' of sacred and profane, banal and sublime, classical and popular. More recently, Julian Johnson has suggested that Mahler's late symphonic idiom (particularly in the Ninth) 'functions as a musical analogue to a specific cultural concept of the maternal'.[90] Johnson is able to draw out the dualities that other commentators have recognized and he is able to demonstrate, with close reference to the musical material of the Ninth, how Mahler effects such dualisms from 'within' the symphonic tradition, by grounding them in teleological musical frames, and by also nonetheless attenuating tonal closure and resolution through a refusal of any kind of 'Beethovenian' (in our terms 'idealistic') synthesis:

> The subjectivity articulated by this music is apparently incapable of reconciling its own antimonies through a linear process. Instead, it oscillates between the desire to forge a teleology, a narrative meaning for itself, and an essentially static state in which the whole principle of closure, on which the subject's definition depends, is severely eroded.[91]

My problem with Johnson's observations is not connected to his vision of this music but to the manner in which the observations are grounded and the ends to which Johnson is prepared to take them: to return again to the image of the maternal, Johnson's view is that, '[w]hatever the evocative or even representational force of

[89] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982). For more on this notion of abjection, see Biddle, 'Policing'.

[90] Julian Johnson, 'The status of the subject in Mahler's Ninth Symphony', *19th-Century Music* XVIII(2) (1994), 108–120: 117.

[91] Ibid., 114.

these passages, it is primarily at the level of musical syntax that their relation to the concept of the maternal is sustained'. This is a view, as Johnson points out, shared by David Holbrook, although they do not altogether converge on the extent to which the maternal image can be stretched across the whole symphony.[92]

> Holbrook's desire to read the Ninth both as a literal narrative and, worse, as a personal narrative belonging specifically to Mahler, leads him to miss an essential point: the Ninth is not about the journey of any specific subject, but explores the conditions of subjectivity *sui generis*. … The implication of [Holbrook's] approach is the envisioning of an assault on some ready-made identity whose battle and subsequent victory over "forces which threaten to disrupt it" (74) is precisely the ideology of much nineteenth-century music. My contention is different: Mahler's Ninth is a musical articulation of the subject in process. This is given most strongly in the musical language itself rather than the narrative that is carried by it.[93]

If, as Johnson suggests, we are to be cautious with Holbrook's view of Mahler's Ninth as somehow 'belonging' to Mahler, then we must also be careful about the claims that the symphony is *about* or an *articulation of* the 'subject in process'. My contention here is not that we should return to uncritical figurations of masculine creativity as simply (or even complexly) available to us in the products of that creativity: Johnson is right to take Holbrook to task for his amateur psychoanalysing and reductive reading of the symphony. The problem here is that Johnson's observation seems insufficiently historicized: just as Holbrook (and many before him, from Riemann to Moser) sought to make observations about the 'meanings' of music without recourse to a proper working through of how musical processes transform and constrain those meanings, so Johnson's assertion that the symphony is a 'musical articulation of the subject in process', whilst certainly much more persuasive than Holbrook's characterization, falls foul of that same problematics of *mediation*. The question is not *whether* the articulation of the subject in process can be traced in the symphony, but, first of all, to question *how* our approaches to the music open up the conditions of possibility for that articulation. Between the figuration of Mahler's music as 'dualistic' and the musical material 'itself' lies an 'abyss', to use Rilke's term, that, since the *fin de siècle* and what Friedrich Kittler has termed its new *Medienlogik*, has been extraordinarily difficult to traverse. And it is precisely this difficulty that Mahler's art articulates. In other words, Mahler's music, when understood from the perspective of Kittler's *Medienlogik*, begins to look like an essay in the impossibility of representation. Let's return (for the third time in this book) to Kittler's declaration on media:

92 David Holbrook, *Gustav Mahler and the Courage to Be* (London: Vision, 1975), 55.

93 Johnson, 'Status', 119.

> A medium is a medium is a medium. Therefore it cannot be translated. To transfer messages from one medium to another always involves reshaping them to conform to new standards and materials. In a discourse network that requires an "awareness of the abysses which divide the one order of sense experience from the other", transposition ["die Transposition"] necessarily takes the place of translation ["die Übersetzung"].[94]

For Kittler, the coagulation of this state of affairs can be located around his 1900 discourse network [or 'Aufschreibesystem', literally 'notation system'] and it is precisely in this historically located ousting of the universal translatability of media by 'transposition' that the 'impossibility' (or improbability) of immanent meaning in Mahler is to be located as historically specific to his moment. What 'transposition' suggests, contrary to the romantic erotics of 'translation', is an extraordinary fragility in the conditions of possibility for cross-media connection. The point here, I think, is to recognize that musical meanings in this network are *as* bound up in the active process of *interpretation* that we bring to the musical materials as they are in the musical materials' *conditions of production*. In this 'network' the passing of 'messages' [*Botschaften*] from music into narrative (or narrative into music), for example, is transformed into a process that has to be constantly remade, refashioned at every delicate site of exchange. The 'occupation' of one medium by another, to transpose somewhat Kretzschmar's formulation, is thus far from universally sustainable, and each time such an occupation is posited, it is in danger of rapid collapse, especially when the delicate geo-political and historical frame that incubated it is left behind when, in a classically presentist gesture, we replace it with our own. I am not hereby proposing a new kind of formalism sanctioned by media theory. Quite the contrary – what Kittler's observations teach us is that we must look in detail at the microhistorical processes of mediation that allow for the kinds of circulation of cultural 'messages' from one medium to another that characterize the discursive uses of music. In Mahler's oeuvre, I would therefore like to suggest, we encounter neither a literal narrative (Holbrook) nor an exploration of the conditions of subjectivity *sui generis* (Johnson), but an obscene politics of reproach: Mahler's music is resolutely neither maternal nor paternal, neither teleological nor circular. If we are at least to attempt a negotiation of the ever-present danger of semantic overdetermination, the 'politics' that Mahler's music engages is one that needs to be carefully reconstructed from within the

[94] Kittler, *Aufschreibesysteme*, 335. Trans. Michael Metteer *Discourse Networks 1800/1900* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 265. The quotation within the quotation is from Rainer Maria Rilke, 'Ur-Geräusch' in the *Sämtliche Werke* ([1919] Wiesbaden, 1955–1966), volume VI, 1092. For an extended analysis of this astonishing short story and its reproduction in full, see Kittler's *Grammophon, Film Typewriter* (Berlin: Brinkman und Bose, 1986), 63–93. English translation: *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, trans. by Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 38–59.

localized discursive frame that incubated it, a frame characterized by a striking ambivalence to authoriality and even multiple meanings.

So, to return to the question I raised at the start of this chapter, what is Mahler's body? The predicament of Mahler's body, as we have already seen, is one of overdetermination – from the *fin-de-siècle* obsession with the continued hardening and policing of the gender divide, the marginalization of putatively 'deviant' bodies, the racio-criminological refiguration of cultural politics and the medicalization of sexuality, the general cultural currency would have inflected Mahler's experience of his body in quite profound ways. We have read how, in accounts of Mahler's physicality (both on the podium and in his more 'private' dealings with friends and family), his body is consistently expanded back into the public discourses of race, gender and sexuality. Even in death, Mahler is 'public', subject to the theatre of representation. This powerfully overdetermined focusing of discursive activity on Mahler's body is a crucial microhistorical operator in any historical generalization we might want to make about the 'meaning' of Mahler's oeuvre.

Just as Kafka effaced his body into the body of writing – he ironized, vilified and nonetheless eroded his own physicality with an extraordinarily sharp and incisive efficiency – so Mahler's body yearns for discursive obliteration. It is here that Mahler's authoriality can make itself felt: not as a Master of his house, but as one of a number of hermeneutic fields that contribute to the construction of the microhistorical specificity of his output. It is through a deterritorialization of physicality that Mahler is able to engage an obscene politics by dissipating his 'naked corporeality' into a multitude of performative discursive selves (in his letters, in his *Alltagsleben*, and in his music): Mahler the philospher, Mahler the clown, Mahler the father, Mahler the husband, Mahler the homosexual, Mahler the ecstatic gesticulating conductor, Mahler the restrained conservative conductor, Mahler the composing automaton, Mahler the nature lover, Mahler the sick man, Mahler the lover, Mahler the bully, Mahler the pedant, Mahler the Jew. The 'performativity' of these selves does not mean, as it clearly does for some of the commentators we have encountered, that Mahler was some kind of 'phoney' cultural chameleon, shifting in and out of falsely projected deceitful selves to suit some dark and devious agenda. What Mahler's multiple selves appear to articulate is the destabilization of the epistemological ground for the unified authorial self: it is in this moment, after all – the moment of Proust, of Mallarmé, of Camus and Musil, Kafka and Wedekind – that Barthes recognized the death of the author and machines threatened for the first time to displace organicist models of subjectivity. The reason why the body takes up such a crucially determining role in the *Reichszwielicht* is because it promises to re-ground subjectivity in an empirical or concrete world, to flesh out a *specific* humanity in the face of the demise of a *general* humanity. Mahler's body, like all deviant bodies, is thus placed under an extraordinarily intense scrutiny because of its betrayal of that project – its betrayal of the thickening of the fleshly life at the hands of the new ubiquitous empiricism.

In *Das Lied von der Erde* (1908), deterritorialization works as a crucial element in the wholesale refusal of the new material (empirical) specifics of humanity. Mahler's choice of Hans Bethge's paraphrase of a collection of eighth-century Chinese poetry *Die chinesische Flöte* has been figured by Adorno, for example, as an engagement of the 'Orientalist' view of the Jew presented to him by mainstream Austrian culture.[95] In this Orientalism we encounter an othering of the Jewish body – in dreamy distant worlds, the body floats out of reach, and returns us yet again to the logic of Scarry's body in pain: for Scarry, remember, suffering is always public, always marking the body out as a discursive Other to the omnipresent weightless hegemon. Yet here, as we have already seen in both Kafka and Mahler's self-images, this weightlessness is taken up as a marker of *Jewish* physicality, as a marker not of the hegemon but, in the anti-Semitic logic of the *fin de siècle*, of his lower other. In the new order against which Mahler rages, it is 'heavy' or 'solid' physicality (like the monster baby or the reclining gargantuan father) that occupies hegemonic territory, not the weightless universalizing self: the world is turned on its head; lumpen materiality is the new hegemony against which the spindly cerebrality of intellectual (Idealist/Jewish) culture is thrown into alteritous relief. Adorno seems to recognize as much when he refers to an atavistic subjectivity in Mahler's oeuvre that, recalling Riemann's characterization, is nonetheless 'new' (and it is here that he departs company from Riemann):

> After the destruction of musical culture, degraded to ideology, a second "whole" builds itself up out of the fragments and scraps of memory. Subjective organizing power enables culture to reappear within the second "whole", against which art protests but which it does not destroy. Each Mahler symphony asks how a living totality can emerge out of the ruins of the debris of the musical world of things.[96]

Here, I think, is a glimmer of recognition at the deadly impasse of Mahler's *meaning*: the 'newness' is ranged against the 'material' which nonetheless 'allows' that second 'whole' to remain.

Adorno's counter-Hegelian characterization is highly seductive, situated as it is in his fervent belief in the historical dialectic of musical material. Like Johnson's eloquent reading of the Ninth, this notion of the musical form as carrying in this manner a kind of historicizing semiosis, a 'subject in process' or a new 'whole' built by the supreme effort of subjective will, is to be located, I suggest, in a complex and not uncritical (but nonetheless somewhat naïve) universalizing Idealism: for all the nuanced dialectical poise of Adorno's reading, it fails to grasp the radicality of Mahler's project. Max Paddison usefully characterizes Adorno's approach to

[95] Theodor W. Adorno, *A Musical Physiognomy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 148–150. Quoted in Hefling, *Lied*, 43.

[96] Theodor Adorno, *Mahler: Eine musikalische Physiognomik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1960), 168. Trans. by and quoted in Max Paddison, *Adorno's Aesthetics of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 258.

the 'late' subject of Mahler's project as referencing both a latent modernity in the musical materials and leaving their atavistic gestures in place:

> The expressive Subject arrives in Mahler through compelling the expressively exhausted gestures of late nineteenth-century tonal material, now commodified and degenerated to kitsch, to speak for a second time. The vehicle for the expression of the Subject in Mahler is the traditional but exhausted one of Romantic melody, the enforced and independent use of which in his music has radical harmonic implications which are taken further in the early works of Schoenberg.[97]

The generalizing historicism of Adorno and Johnson's readings misses the particularities of the delicate epistemological frame that incubates the *refusal* of meaning in Mahler. Caught in the mismatch of at least two irreconcilable epistemological frames – the impossibility of both the organic subject of romantic universalism and the fleshly physicality of the 'new' empirical-industrial hegemony – Mahler's music interdicts musical hermeneutics. 'Subjective' melody is pitted against collective clamour, voice against accompaniment, continuity against closure, circle against vector. None of the topoi allows for a coherent structuring of confrontation: the dualisms are all mismatched, they 'cross' each other. Mahler deterritorializes his body by dissipating it into other modes of being: like the crossing of exit trajectories in 'Auf der Galerie', Mahler's music bars interpretation and sidesteps the authorial body. Exit trajectories, and their criss-crossing, are the dominant topos here: the deterritorialization of creative production finds its most effective strategy in the crafting of a delicate epistemological impasse, a setting of distinct epistemological frames against each other. To deterritorialize is to efface or otherwise disrupt the organic connection of cultural production to its progenitor by calling the unequivocal unanimity of that progenitor into question. In its place, a range of metonymic figures are able to operate: in deterritorialized writing, the authorial body can so easily slip between the *writing* and *written* bodies, and can take up a multitude of figurations that block semiosis – a dark shape, a beatle, a new body, a crisis, a gatekeeper to a forever closed door. In the context of an extraordinary overdetermination of the Jewish authorial body, creative production is a revolt against that overdetermination, that overinterpretation; in short, creative production becomes a politics of refusal: 'I can do nothing but work; over the course of the years I have forgotten how to do anything else. It's as though I were a morphine addict or a drunkard to whom one forbade his vice all at once'.

Symphonic form in Mahler takes on a politicized and radically inderdictory charge: on the one hand, his *Symphonik* abstracts the creative process into an idealizing but formally experimental territory in which the progenitor can revel in a radically expanded sonic frame and live out the illusion of universal creativity; on the other, it marks a brutally attenuated and fragmented discourse that bars the

[97] Paddison, *Aesthetics*, 259.

figuration of the subject (*sui generis* or otherwise) and interdicts the carrying of 'messages', as Kittler puts it, from one medium to another.

Mahler's constant refiguration of the Jewish authorial body in his letters compounds the view I want to express here, that composition works as a way of working through (or working out) an epistemologically impossible predicament: how to assimilate oneself to the hegemonic physicality of the Austrian hegemon (how to change one's body, how to be a symphonic composer) in the face of a ubiquitous racial theorization of the Jewish body as immutable, always outside. The Jewish male body, that physical impediment to the pleasuring in cultural space, is written out(wards) by its destabilization and Mahler's music is implicated in this process, as we have seen, not as a simple 'expression' of that physical impediment, but as a medium-specific, localized active negotiation and working-through of the impasse.

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Chapter 5
Postlude

As a small, rather wistful child, growing up in the lovely quiet and slightly dull safeness of semi-rural British suburbia, I was a particularly solemn and precocious child reader. As 'boy' I was an unmitigated failure: tree-climbing, football, dirt and physical exertion of any kind were anathema to me. I was not a sportsman, I was a *reader*, and I identified fiercely as such. I read in order to be what I felt I already was: something different, something outside the norm, something on its own. I remember once, on a rainy afternoon, stumbling across, in a collection of my parents' books, a strange fragment penned by the architect and theorist Adolf Loos in 1913:

> today, the middle classes are deeply moved by the works of the crazy, sick musician. Have they become aristocratic, are they like the nobles of 1814, struck with awe at the will of the genius? No […] they have something wrong with their ears now, they all have Beethoven's ears. […] All their anatomical details, all their ossicles, labyrinths, drums, and trumpets, have taken on the diseased forms of Beethoven's ears.[1]

I remember both my fascination with and my incomprehension at this passage. Loos's characteristically strange and beautiful ruminations seemed utterly opaque to me. I was a reader trying to run before I could walk, certainly, but I was also a reader drawn to the obscure, the 'difficult'. Part of that reading would no doubt have been performative: look at what I am reading! But it would also, like all spasms of the superego, have delivered its own disciplinary frisson. It would have thrilled me, I'm sure, to be reading this grown-up text, and I think I have taken with me from my rather solemn and introspective childhood a certain predilection for textual complexity. I remain fascinated by what is unspoken in the message, what seems to speak and yet does not, what wants to make itself heard and yet is mute.

I was struck then, and have never ceased to be enchanted by, the extraordinarily obscure terms on which listening is addressed by Loos. These 1913 ruminations on the meanings of Beethoven for early twentieth-century audiences – a Beethoven that had, until then, served as an exemplar of that peculiarly public notion of the male creative genius – surely raise the question (extremely obliquely, and obscurely) as to the relation of gender and music by reference to the body (or,

[1] Adolf Loos, 'Die kranken Ohren Beethovens', in Adolf Open (ed.), *Ornament und Verbrechen* (Vienna: Geor Prachner Verlag, [1913] 2000), 204.

rather, anatomy). The dislocated inventory of body parts and instruments ('drums' and 'trumpets' in the German also resonate with the medical terms for parts of the ear and, of course, for Beethoven's ear prosthesis[2]), their disease, their lumpen-mass, all seemed to me as a child to point to something rather magical, what I have now come to understand as a rather troubled and contested connectivity between the body and listening, between sound and the flesh that vibrates with it in order to 'receive' it.

This flesh out-of-place, to be sure, is the primary site after Loos's *fin de siècle* for the thinking of gender. In this fragment, gender has surreptitiously become synonymous with biology, anatomy, a kind of medicalized matter available to the scrutiny of science. In this weird and disturbing juxtaposition of listening and flesh we encounter an eloquent articulation of what many at that *fin de siècle* perceived as a radical degradation of listening. Indeed, with the intensification of the scientific scrutiny of the body and the medicalization of discourses on gender and sexuality, listening degrades for the bourgeois aesthete into a mere mechanistic vibrating of body parts and its implication in the degradation of gender into a genitally ordered binarism is part of the story that this book has tried to tell. Gender here is a kind of hidden work or labour in the act of listening. It demands a regimen, certain rituals of language and behaviour. And the figure of Beethoven, marked by intense and sustained attempts at gender hardening cross the long nineteenth century, delivers a certain specificity here that lends the fragment a haunted quality. The fragment is about mourning, which, according to Derrida:

> consists always in attempting to ontologize remains, to make them present, in the first place by *identifying* the bodily remains and by *localizing* the dead (all ontologization, all semanticization – philosophical, hermenutical, or psychoanalytical – finds itself caught in the act of mourning but, as such, it does not yet think it …).[3]

For Loos, then, the demand of the body parts here is that they attest to there *having been* a Beethoven. This lumpen trace, the 'grave' of Beethovenian listening, demands care, attention, localization and a set of practices (a kind of 'work') that attest to both its purpose and its meaning. What this double function (as symbol and site) points to is the complexity of the young radical's relation with the past, and the stubborn persistence, like a stain, of gender as a noise in the signal.

[2] 'und die Bürger lauschen ergriffen den Werken des kranken, verrückten Musikanten. Sind sie adelig geworden, wie die Edlen vom Jahre 1814, und haben Ehrfurcht bekommen vor dem Willen des Genius? Nein [… s]ie haben alle die kranken Ohren Beethovens. […] Alle anatomische Details, alle Knöchelchen, Windungen, Trommelfell und Trompeten erhielten die krankhaften Formen, wie sie das Ohr Beethovens aufwies.' Adolf Loos, 'Die kranken Ohren Beethovens'.

[3] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (London: Routledge, 1994), 9.

For Loos, as for many growing up in the last years of the Austro-German nineteenth century, to obliquely raise the question as to how gender might *sound* is to raise a whole set of other pressing questions: how can matter breathe life? How is meaning 'impregnated' into flesh? How do men come to be as subjects within the body? In the disease of the decaying ear parts, in the traumatic dissection of the body into lumps of matter, Loos articulates the troubling nature of bodies that listen under the industrial logic of mass production, of bodies soon, and certainly by the time this prose fragment was first published (1919), to be torn to pieces by the first of two devastating world wars: listening too has fallen under the sway of industry; it too has succumbed to the debilitating dehumanization of labour. In Loos's bitter complaint there is an implicit reproach: listening, of all activities, *should have remained aloof* from such processes, since to listen at the beginning of the long nineteenth century within the Austro-German romantic economy was to embrace an exemplary interiority, to deepen one's humanity, to experience a fulsome abundance in the self. Yet this kind of reproach is not confined to the end of that long century. Listening seems to have come under extraordinary pressure *throughout* the long nineteenth century to carry the burden of *Bildung*, the development or formation of the exemplary bourgeois self. It nonetheless operates with a peculiar and quite specific intensity here. The shift that we have been able to discern in our readings of texts about music from that century is a shift in the very terms on which subjects listen: William Weber and others have been able to sketch a clear image of the shift in concert hall practice, in line with the rise of what I have termed in this book 'fixated listening',[4] but that 'great transformation', as Weber terms it, is symptomatic of a much broader shifting of the political and epistemological terrain in which the ever more professionalized music expert enters the academy, the discipline of *Musikwissenschaft* makes claims for a new disciplinarity distinct from the passions of the amateur, and a new set of textual specificities (new specializations of knowledge or 'divisions of labour' as Karl Marx put it) are enacted. The claims to disciplinarity made by any new discipline are inevitably hybridizing: *Musikwissenschaft* relied on both the older models of *Altertumswissenschaft* and newer 'scientific' scholarships to forge a specific institutional territory for itself. And what is clear is that, precisely at this moment of explicit institutionalization, musicology focuses its attentions on certain methodological approaches that hide or translate *enjoyment into discipline*. I have suggested elsewhere that disciplines, especially those like musicology that have their roots in aristocratic and bourgeois amateurism, are designed precisely with *discipline* in mind:[5] they work as interventions in knowledge to ensure a secure domain, thereby enabling claims to be maintained about what belongs to that domain and, by implication, what should not:

[4] William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[5] Ian Biddle, 'On the radical in musicology', *Radical Musicology*, 1 (2006), http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk (17 May), 14 pars: par 7.

> One has to know. *One has to know it*. *One has to have knowledge*. Now, to know is to know *who* and *where*, to know whose body it really is and what place it occupies – for it must stay in its place. In a safe place. Hamlet does not ask merely to whom the skull belongs. He demands to know to whom the grave belongs – nothing could be worse, for the work of mourning, than confusion or doubt: one *has to know* who is buried where – and it is *necessary* (to know – to make certain) that, in what remains of him, *he remain there*. Let him stay there and move no more![6]

Knowing, then, is tantamount to tending the grave. It requires both a localization and disciplining of the remains. They should stay here, and move no more. The work of mourning requires nothing less. The discipline of musicology, perhaps one of the most sustained works of mourning in the Western academy, is enthralled to a deep epistemological nostalgia. Born at that moment when Loos despairs at the new decadent listening practices of the public, in a retrospective idealization of the ascendant moment of late Viennese classicism, musicology has consistently marginalized and censured most of what sociologists of listening (were there any) would term normative. The theme of Loos's fragment, the decline of listening into a kind of undead mindless consuming, figured through the transformation of the concert-going public's ears into 'Beethoven's ears', works, of course, as an avant-garde reproach tinged with that key marker of the musicological moment, regret: the disease of the ears here not only invokes the classically 'modernist' exasperation at the deadly atavism of audiences (although it is no coincidence, of course, that musicology and European modernism are coterminous) but, and this is crucial here it seems to me, also constitutes an attempt to transform that atavism into something akin to a sickness, a *bodily* failure or impasse. In short, this is an attempt to somatize the generalizing claims of conservative audiences and to make them, through reference to the body, highly *particular*, to render them local, and to undermine any claims they might make to speak for more than their own rather limited (class) interest. The body here functions as a strategic limitation, a territorialization. This is a strategy we have noted elsewhere, but the body is specifically employed here (synecdochically presented by the ear, the ossicles, the diseased inner canals) to affront the generality of middle-brow bourgeois taste with a discursive shock: the cultural effectiveness of middle-brow bourgeois culture is curtailed by its limitation to the tiny realm of flesh-for-flesh; as Scarry puts it, 'those without power' will have a 'body made emphatic by being continually altered through various forms of creation, instruction and *wounding*' (my emphasis), and this body marks a territory that contracts one's sphere of existence, 'down to the small circle of one's immediate presence'.[7]

Scarry's extraordinary observation has run quietly but deliberately through this book, and her observations on the power relations at work in the West's

[6] Derrida, *Specters*, 9.

[7] Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 207.

disciplining of the body have proven useful in helping me shape this book's trajectory. In short, following the logic of Scarry's argument, this has been the way of hegemonic bourgeois man: to shore up his precariously constituted cultural power by carefully maintaining his monopoly on the public discourse, by limiting the feminine and other counter-hegemonic voices to the realm of the local, specifically the body, and by seeking out and vilifying those mechanisms that seemed to undermine the effective operation of the contemporary gender machine. For Loos, the body, flesh, especially that most delicate of orifices, the ear, operates as a metaphor for a masculinity curtailed. Whereas the complaint of a Wackenroder or a Hoffmann might have been that listening intervenes too overtly in the flow of discourse, for Loos, the loss of what we might term 'virile hearing', its putative emasculation, inserts rather a certain ambivalence into the relationship between bodies, masculinity and the modern personality.

Although, one might argue, Loos's particularly Viennese articulation of modernism is one marked with a contempt for atavistic masculinities, it is nonetheless an articulation that seeks to hold on to the possibility of some kind of radicalized masculine ideal of the effective, the active: this is the duplicity of the Loosian position which, on the one hand, is radical in its critique of the simple *Hausherr* and his attendant bourgeois *Gemütlichkeit* and yet which, on the other, nonetheless makes recourse to the kinds of conventional rhetorical strategies we have encountered numerous times in this book – Loos explicitly re-engages (whilst also problematizing) the trope of somatization in order to attenuate the masculinity that attends the male urban concert-goer whilst also seeking to replace it with another masculinity that operates under precisely the same gender logic. The *older* middle-brow creature's masculinity is sickly and deviant, touched by an unhealthy and deadly fixation on the mouldering ears of a dead Beethoven. Loos's new masculinity is vibrant, virile, strong. And so the gender matrix remains intact: one oppressive masculinity is replaced by another. What poses as radicalism here, then, is remarkably conservative in its gender-political outcomes.[8]

There is a striking echo of this sentiment in a passage written in 1894 by the reluctant radical Heinrich Schenker in his beguiling short essay 'Das Hören in der Musik' ['Listening in music']:

> The greatest triumph, the proudest delight, in listening to a work of art is in raising up the ear to the same level ["Macht"] as the eye. One need think only of a landscape, broad and beautiful, framed by mountains and hills, full of fields

[8] A similar point has recently been made by Claire Taylor-Jay, '"I am blessed with fruit": masculinity, androgyny and creativity in early twentieth-century German music', in Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson (eds), *Masculinity and Western Musical Practice* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), 183–207. Speaking of the conception of gender and creativity in Germany in the first few decades of the twentieth century, she notes 'in some respects, the feminine is valued, but only if it is put into the service of art by being filtered through the male genius' (207).

> and meadows and woods and streams, full of all this, which nature creates in all its beauty and variety. And then one might climb to a place, where one can take in the whole landscape in a single look … In the same way, there is, somewhere above the artwork, a place from which one can see and hear from the spirit of the artwork all its pathways and goals, its dawdling and raging, all its variety and limitation, all its dimensions and relations.[9]

Schenker's figuration of the most ideal modes of listening as a studiedly quasi-Nietzschean pleasuring in the lofty isolation of what we might term the *Überhörer*, to shamelessly bowdlerize Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, is fuelled by a rage against the particular, the local, the piecemeal. In this rage against the metonym and the synecdoche, Schenker, like Loos, both engages the discourse of somatization and refutes it: the *Überhörer* must enact a modality of being that is both a heightened physicality (listening that 'sees') and yet calls for its annulment (this heightening, of course, is an unattainable ideal for the mundane body, so this Schenkerian 'body' must be somehow beyond the limitations of mundane fleshiness). Whereas for Loos the listening audience is attached to a dead man's ears, the mundane listener in Schenker is doomed to stay down in the valley, weighed down by particularity, imprisoned in a body that is always already too heavy to fly.

Nietzsche's take on the burden of listening is one that has clearly impacted on both of these figurative plays around the topoi and tropes of listening. In *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (first published 1892), Nietzsche has the prophet Zarathustra recount a disturbing episode where he meets a group of 'inverse cripples' on a bridge over a fast-flowing river; the most terrifying of these creatures is the genius with a giant ear:

> And when I came out of my solitude and crossed this bridge for the first time, I could not believe my eyes and looked and looked again, and said eventually: "That is an ear! An ear as large as a man!" I looked closer and truly, under the ear something moved, something pitifully small, meagre ["ärmlich"] and gangly ["schmächtig"]. And truly, the monstrous ear sat on a small thin stem – but the

[9] Heinrich Schenker, 'Das Hören in der Musik', *Neue Revue* 5(2) (1894), 115–121; repr. Helmut Federhofer (ed.), *Heinrich Schenker als Essayist und Kritiker: Gessamelter Aufsätze, Rezensionen und kleinere Berichter aus den Jahrn 1891–1901* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1990), 96–103: 'Was aber im Hören eines Kunstwerkes der höchste Triumph, die stolzeste Wonne ist, ist, das Ohr gleichsam zur Macht des Auges zu erheben, zu steigern. Man denke eine Landschaft, eine weite und schöne, von Bergen und Hügeln umrahmt, voll Felder und Wiesen und Wälder und Bächen, voll alles dessen, was die Natur in Schönheit un Mannigfaltigkeit, so vor sich hin, schafft. Und nun besteige man einen Ort, der mit Einem die gesammte Landschaft dem Blick erschließt … So gibt es auch, über dem Kunstwerk hoch irgendwo gelegen, einen Punckt, von dem aus der Geist das Kunstwerk, all' seine Wege, und Ziele, das Verweilen und Stürmen, alle Mannigfaltigkeit und Begrenzheit, all Maße und ihre Verhältnisse deutlich überblickt, überhört' (103).

> stem was a man! With a magnifying glass to one's eye, one could make out an envious little face and also, that a puffed up little soul was dangling from the stem. The people informed me, however, that the large ear was not just a man, but a great man, a genius. But I never believe the people when they speak of great men – I held on to my belief that here was an inverse cripple, who has too little of everything and too much of one thing.[10]

The inverse cripple, then, and specifically the giant-eared genius, would seem on first reading to represent the burden of specialization, a burden Karl Marx had made much of in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844). It is, however, the strange play of envy displayed on the face of the giant-eared genius that opens up another reading, one more attuned, perhaps, to the medico-political context in which this text was written: that 'envious little face', peeping out from underneath the giant ear, works under the logic of what I called in Chapter 4, paraphrasing Slavoj Žižek,[11] an *obscene politics*, in which, as we have seen, body and epistemology overlap, where the physical predicament is always already political, ideologically encoded onto the bearer of the animated cadaver, always inscribed (and continually re-inscribing itself) onto the fleshly limits of the self. The estrangement or specialization that would have been recognizable to Karl Marx in this figure is an intensification or somatization of the material domain where the body is made to stand in for the political territory, and that 'envy' draws our attention to there being something out of balance that is *legible*, available to scrutiny both for its victim (hence the *envy* here) and its critics. The obscenity of this micro-political encounter is grounded precisely in its consensual disdain for the imbalance, a primary mechanism, as we have seen, for the operation of hegemony: Zarathustra dismisses it and yet its victim is also fully cognizant of his own uncanny out-of-placeness and both, in some sense, consent to it.

Between Nietzsche, Schenker and Loos, then, there is a covert agreement on the nature of bourgeois listening. As a debased and amateurish practice that, at its most powerful and most unmediated, could mark the man who engages it as

[10] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Also Sprach Zarathustra Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen* (Berlin: Goldmann, 1999), 114–115: 'Und als ich aus meiner Ensamkeit kam und zum ersten Male über diese Brücke ging: da traute ich meinen Augen nicht und sah hin, und wieder hin, und sagte endlich: "Das ist ein Ohr! Ein Ohr, so groß wie ein Mensch!" Ich sah noch besser hin: und wirklich, unter dem Ohre bewegte sich noch etwas, das zum Erbarmen klein und ärmlich und schmächtig war. Und wahrhaftig, das ungeheure Ohr saß auf einem kleinen dünnen Stiele – der Stiel aber war ein Mensch! Wer ein Glas vor das Auge nahm, konnte sogar noch ein kleines neidisches Gesichtchen erkennen; auch, daß ein gedunsenes Seelchen am Stiele baumelte. Das Volk sagte mir aber, das große Ohr sei nicht nur ein Mensch, sondern ein großer Mensch, ein Genie. Aber ich glaubte dem Volke niemals, wenn es von großen Menschen redete – und behielt meinen Glauben bei, daß es ein umgekehrter Krüppel sei, der an allem zu wenig und an einem zu viel habe.' My translation.

[11] See Slavoj Žižek, 'Superego by default', *Metastases of Enjoyment* (London: Verso, 1994), 54–85.

unbalanced, fay, effete, distracted, even impotent, listening is to be disciplined by a rhetorical return to the figure of an ideal, perhaps even Arcadian, body – the airy and light *Überhörer*, the clean body with new ears, a lofty disavowal from the mountain tops of the lop-sided ear-burdened genius. Attending all three of the negative figures of listening (the undead Beethoven-ears, the dilettante valley-dwelling listener and the over-specialized ear-burdened 'genius'), there is, as we have seen, a certain haunting. Undoubtedly, terms like 'spectre', 'spectral' and 'haunting' have been en vogue for at least the last 15 years, especially in literary criticism touched by deconstruction or in cultural studies. Yet my usage here points to something quite specific in this *fin-de-siècle* understanding of listening and the cultural work of sonic materials. What is 'spectral' here is the very impossibility of man himself, of men, masculinities. The desire for a deterritorialization of the male body, which in Mahler is the symptom of an obscene politics of refusal, marks also a certain epistemological gap between the operation of power and the cultural work of the body. Even the most body-centred discourses of public masculinity (in the proliferation of fitness regimens and the industrialization of the body in war and mass production) are about placing the body into a straightjacket, limiting its specific physicality. This simple dualism, outlined by Scarry, is remarkably persistent throughout the long nineteenth century and Loos, Schenker and Nietzsche all articulate it anew, but from a logic not completely dissimilar to that which marked Wackenroder's palpitating *Seelenlehre*. It is, then, the very impossibility of a masculinity that is both bodily and culturally unlimited that haunts these figurations: man is open to contagion, fleshy, limited to the sphere of his body, yet his claims to hegemony mean that he yearns also for a way of being in which that body might forever expand, spread itself over a much larger cultural terrain.

The queerness of this book, then, has been not so much in its *explicit* adherence to a queer politics, fundamentally committed though it is to that politics, but in its commitment to estranging our relationship a *second time* with the Austro-German nineteenth-century tradition, a second time that is after Kramer, McClary, Subotnik and others were able to ask so powerfully and disturbingly in whose name the musics of that tradition are wielded. In returning to that moment of musicological radicalization in the 1990s and asking again what it is we may have missed, in asking how we might *prolong* that moment, I am choosing to place myself in radical epistemological jeopardy. It is always in that *second* wave, in that moment just when it seems that the storm has passed, that the toughest work begins and where one leaves oneself most open to the accusation of scholarly nostalgia. Yet it is precisely in that nostalgia that I seek to look for a way forward, precisely in that reaching back to the so-called culture wars, that, paradoxically, I have sought to find, in the manner of a kind of leftist romanticism that refuses the greyness of the present, a way of bringing the present back into a critical relation to itself. We might term this a paradox of radical nostalgia.

In the operation of this paradox, one can detect also a certain methodological slipperiness, an epistemological fragmentation and a certain (pathological, perhaps)

commitment to against-the-grain reading. Yet to operate within this queer paradox is categorically not the same as operating within a more general (and perhaps less specific) 'deconstructive' orientation. There is a tendency to label 'deconstructive' any scholarly approach that reads texts critically. If this usage were accurate, then undoubtedly Nietzsche, Hegel, Marx, Freud, Kant and Schopenhauer are all 'deconstructivists' too. What separates their mode of reading from deconstruction is its engagement of some kind of historicity of, and a theological belief in, the subject: for them (even for Nietzsche, it would seem) the subject has a *longue durée*, which is evidenced as much by the present as by the past. No matter how radically they may seek to disrupt that narrative, no matter how much they might want to set it aside or critique it, they are in some sense still *true to it*. I have tried to hold on to that notion, since a resolute queer politics is not about endless identity play but about building spaces in which critical identities can be shaped and unfurled *as critique*, *as agentives* seeking change.

In the short parable 'Before the law', which I discussed in the introduction to this book, we saw how the refusal of entry to the Law entailed an infantilization of s/he who seeks entry: the 'man from the country' in Kafka's parable operates in the manner of a masculinity curtailed, interrupted. Now, if it were possible to queer this gender political association of 'bad' masculinity with infantilization or impotence, how might we proceed? Rather than being a marker of an incompleteness, the man from the country might be reworked here as a dissident masculinity that engages with the power structures that forbid entry to the Law *only because they fascinate him*. He might be refigured as a supplement that disturbs the Law. Imagine, for example, a gay man from the city for whom the sternness of the doorkeeper represents a highly charged and sexualized masculinity, and *a cause of desire*. In that moment, the very moment the authority of the threshold is turned upside-down and comes to stand in for the cause of desire, the deadlock is broken and the doorkeeper is infantilized. Or imagine instead a performatively butch lesbian who wishes to enter, and who operates hegemonic masculine discourse with all the performative confidence of the doorkeepers. Or imagine even an androgynous young woman or man, resolutely impervious to the operation of the older inflexible masculine discourse represented by the doorkeepers. What is striking in all these fanciful rewritings of the parable is that the encounter only makes sense if the man from the country *recognizes the authority of the doorkeeper*. The queering of that encounter thus shows the relation of power for what it is – a *consensual* relationship, the basis of which is shown as *fantastical*. Only as one attaches to the authority of the doorkeeper is one compelled to stay at the threshold:

> Since the door to the Law was open as always, and the doorkeeper stepped to one side of it, the man stoops in order to peer inside through the door. When the doorkeeper saw this he laughed and said: "If you are drawn to it, try to enter, despite my forbidding it. But take note: I am powerful. And I am only the least of the doorkeepers. From hall to hall here is one doorkeeper after another, each

> more powerful than the last. The third doorkeeper is already so terrible that even I cannot bear to look at him."[12]

The Law in this fantasy is fulsome, abundant and yet we have shown it to be hollow, empty, consisting of one threshold leading to another and another. There is no centre, no inside as such. This is the very fantasy that queer reading seeks to open up: masculine discourse is empty and the door is closed on *you* because *you* attach to its fantasy work.

What a counter-reading such as this does, it seems to me, is model a way of reading that operates strategically, with a commitment to activism. Deconstruction may be wielded more widely as a disruption or disturbance, but in the end one must own the plan under which that disturbance is set in motion in order, especially, to reread and restage the failure of masculinity. This strategy involves a certain act of faith, and an admittedly mobile but nonetheless functioning conception of false consciousness. It is as if one were able to find a space from which to see, a place from which to operate ideology critique, without ever falling to the charm of that fantasy. Slavoj Žižek has spoken provocatively of the 'empty space', from which one might be able to operate, as if one were able to break the deadlock of ideology, as if there were a place from which ideology could be understood but which must always remain empty.[13] It can never have content, he suggests, but it is a space that operates, rather in the manner of a variable in a mathematical equation, as a holding place, a lynch pin, a pragmatic *mirador* from which one imagines the whole structure. Žižek contrasts this with the 'always inside' in which much academic 'radical chic' operates, pointing out that many so-called radical academics in the American (and, one assumes, other Anglophone) academies are largely content with the operation of global capital:

[12] 'Da das Tor zum Gesetz offensteht wie immer und der Türhüter beiseite tritt, bückt sich der Mann, um durch das Tor in das Innere zu sehn. Als der Türhüter das merkt, lacht er und sagt: "Wenn es dich so lockt, versuche es doch, trotz meines Verbotes hineinzugehn. Merke aber: Ich bin mächtig. Und ich bin nur der unterste Türhüter. Von Saal zu Saal stehn aber Türhüter, einer mächtiger als der andere. Schon den Anblick des dritten kann nicht einmal ich mehr ertragen."' Franz Kafka, 'Vor dem Gesetz', in Max Brod (ed.), *Erzählungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, [1919] 1998), 120; trans. and ed. by Gabriel Josipovici as 'Before the law', in *Collected Stories* (London: Everyman Library, 1993), 173–174: 173. Translation modified.

[13] 'If, today, one follows a direct call to act, this act will not be performed in an empty space – it will be an act WITHIN the hegemonic ideological coordinates: those who "really want to do something to help people" get involved in (undoubtedly honorable) exploits like Medecins sans frontiere, Greenpeace, feminist and anti-racist campaigns, which are all not only tolerated, but even supported by the media, even if they seemingly enter the economic territory (say, denouncing and boycotting companies which do not respect ecological conditions or which use child labor) – they are tolerated and supported as long as they do not get too close to a certain limit.' Slavoj Žižek, 'Repeating Lenin', *Lacan.ink*, http://www.lacan.com/replenin.htm (2001) (accessed May 2006).

> My personal experience is that practically all of the 'radical' academics silently count on the long-term stability of the American capitalist model, with the secure tenured position as their ultimate professional goal (a surprising number of them even play on the stock market). If there is a thing they are genuinely horrified of, it is a radical shattering of the (relatively) safe life environment of the 'symbolic classes' in the developed Western societies. Their excessive Politically Correct zeal when dealing with sexism, racism, Third World sweatshops, etc., is thus ultimately a defense against their own innermost identification, a kind of compulsive ritual whose hidden logic is: "Let's talk as much as possible about the necessity of a radical change to make it sure that nothing will really change!"[14]

Of course the critique is an easy one to make and one might be just as tempted to level it at Žižek himself, as a symptom perhaps of the very masculine discourse I am seeking to problematize here, but the observations he makes still have some force. A crucial distinction Žižek is trying to make here is between, on the one hand, a politics of disturbance that really *does* want to shake up and jeopardize the symbolic and economic systems that produce us and, on the other, a politics that can only pleasure in the safe 'what if' of that disturbance. I find this distinction quite useful since it is one that resonates with the distinction I want to draw here between 'queer' and what in the Anglophone academy often passes for 'deconstructive' reading.[15] The former is much closer to Althusser's 'symptomatic' reading than to the Anglophone academy's reception and active mis-reading of Derrida.[16]

The disruption that I have tried to enact in this book is as much about questioning the nature of our discipline as it is about the specific questions these historically contingent materials ask of us. The narrative of this book runs from early romantic figurations of listening, the gender work of the composer figure, Beethoven reception as a symptom of the passage of the male ego, the male bourgeois disdain for the rabble to the prison house of the racialized composer-body; all these moments in the passage of bourgeois masculinity from Wackenroder's naked saint to Loos's mouldering ears are symptomatic of the ways in which art music intervened in the construction and maintenance of masculine authoritarian discourse. Each moment retains a certain autonomy, a certain self-reliance, and yet each is linked to the trajectory of the modern personality and its investment in art music. This is the story of the emergence of a personality that, as Lacan put it, suffers under the 'social psychosis' of its alienation from itself. The paradox of the nostalgic radical is thus, like Schenker's and Loos's radicalism, something of

[14] Žižek, 'Repeating'.

[15] For a thorough-going and persuasive critique of the radical chic of 'deconstrictive' approaches in musical analysis, see Adam Krims, 'Disciplining deconstruction (for music analysis)', *19th-Century Music* XXI(3) (spring 1998), 297–324.

[16] For a radicalized reading of Derrida, and a critique of the Anglophone libertarian reading of his work, see Terry Eagleton, 'Frère Jacques: The politics of deconstruction', *Semiotica* 63 (1987), 351–358.

a useful queering point since it allows for a problematization of the antagonism of the kinds of historicism that dally in the exotic of the past and those that seek to aggrandize that past in the name of grand schemata like 'empire', 'nation' and so on. And yet, for most historians, perhaps the most heinous blasphemy of this book has been to dare to raise the question of the *longue durée* and to speak of this modern personality as if it might have a coherent articulable trajectory. Perhaps it is this that will make most trouble for this book – its perhaps impudent and queer insistence, contrary to the tenets of historicisms old and new, to think in ways that are not fundamentally historical, not fundamentally about the garnering of local networks. In short, I hope this book has shown that to read in a manner indebted to a queer sensibility is to read in ways that confound and disturb historical narratives since queer ≠ history.

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